

Desolate Era

(莽荒纪)

Book 19

Empyrean God

I Eat Tomatoes

(我吃西红柿)

Story Description:

Fate had never been kind to Ji Ning. Wracked by illnesses and infirm his entire life on Earth, Ning knew early on that he would die as a teenager. What he didn't know was that there really was such a thing as life after death, and that the multiverse was a far larger place than he thought. A lucky twist of fate (one of the few in Ning's life) meant that Ning was reborn into a world of Immortals and monsters, of Ki Refiners and powerful Fiendgods, a world where Dynasties lasted for millions of years. A world which is both greater...and yet also smaller... than he ever could imagine. He would have the opportunity to join them, and in this life, Ning swore to himself, he would never let himself be weak again! The Era he was born into was a Desolate one, but Ning would make it his era.

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

Chapter 1: The Secret History of the Three Realms (1)

The spatial whirlpool led directly to the air above Mount Innerheart.

“Ji Ning, Redsnow, come with me,” Subhuti instructed in midair.

“Yes.” Ji Ning and Empyrean God Redsnow both obediently followed behind him. As for Snow Scorpion, Primelight, and the other Empyrean Gods, the six of them temporarily entered the underwater estate for now.

Within that Daoist monastery inside Mount Innerheart.

Subhuti gracefully landed on the ground, then sat down in the lotus position.

Ning and Redsnow both stood obediently by his side.

“Redsnow.” Subhuti looked towards Redsnow. Smiling, he said, “Last time, when I saw you fight in the Nihilum Zone, it didn’t seem as though you had yet touched upon the essence of spacetime.”

“It was due to that battle, especially when I saw you attack, Patriarch, that I gained some insights. I was able to join the power of time and the power of space together, and thus able to seek out the gateway that leads to spacetime,” Redsnow said reverently.

Subhuti now understood. When he had struck, his attack had naturally contained the countless mysteries of spacetime within it.

Redsnow had been training for countless eras; he had been just a single step away from entering the realm of spacetime. After that life-and-death battle, and after seeing Subhuti attack...it wasn’t strange for him to have been inspired by it.

“Do you know which person in the Three Realms has the highest level of insight into spacetime?” Subhuti beamed merrily as he looked at Redsnow.

“I once heard my Manorlord say,” Redsnow said respectfully, “That you, Patriarch, have the greatest command over spacetime in the entire Three Realms. This is the reason why you can move about without a trace, and

why you were able to establish your Crescent world on a completely different dimensional level.”

Subhuti let out a sigh. “Threelives did indeed value you highly. He was willing to tell you anything. Yes...my Crescent world is on a completely different dimensional level than the rest of the Three Realms, which is why those other Daofathers are unable to find it.”

“Master...what do you mean, ‘different dimensional level’?” Ning asked.

Both Subhuti and Redsnow were cultivators in spacetime. As for Ji Ning? He hadn’t even gained insights into the Grand Dao of Space or the Grand Dao of Time, to say nothing of spacetime.

“Have you ever seen a layer cake?” Subhuti smiled as he looked at Ning.

“Yes.” Ning nodded.

“The other worlds of the Three Realms all exist on the uppermost layer of a ‘layer cake’,” Subhuti said with a laugh. “My Crescent world, however, is in one of the other layers. Ordinary movement techniques and Greater Teleportation techniques only allow you to move across the uppermost surface of the layer cake...thus, no matter what you do, you are unable to enter my Crescent world.”

Ning was speechless. “So space can actually be divided into a series of layers...”

“Heaven and Earth are naturally filled with endless mysteries and marvels.” Subhuti nodded.

“If that’s the case...doesn’t that mean the Crescent world is the safest place of all? Aside from you, Master, no other Daofathers can enter here. Doesn’t this mean that you can completely avoid this great storm?” Ning hurriedly asked.

“No.” Subhuti shook his head. “I cannot avoid it. I suppose I can temporarily avoid it for now...but later on, I won’t be able to.”

“Why is that? They clearly have no way of entering this place. Why can’t you avoid it?” Ning asked.

Subhuti pondered for a moment, then shook his head and said, "I can't answer your question for now. There are many things which even I do not understand. However, I can subconsciously sense fate working behind the scenes to guarantee that no living creature within the Three Realms will be able to avoid this tribulation. Ji Ning...since you have already become a Pure Yang True Immortal, I will naturally tell you many of the secrets of the Three Realms. But those that even I don't know, I naturally cannot tell you. Remember this; this vast universe is far too mysterious. Even Mother Nuwa eventually made the decision to enter the infinite primordial chaos in search of answers."

Ning nodded.

"Redsnow." Subhuti looked towards Redsnow. "All of my other supreme techniques have successors...but I have yet to find any suitable successors to my most valuable skills, my supreme spacetime arts. Are you willing to accept me as your master?"

Redsnow was shocked...then overjoyed. He hurriedly fell to his knees. "Your disciple greets you, Master!"

"Hahaha..." Subhuti laughed as well. "You may rise."

"Your junior apprentice-brother greets you, senior apprentice-brother." After rising, Redsnow immediately bowed towards Ning.

Ning was instantly rendered speechless. Redsnow had been born during the earliest days of the universe, and so Ning had always respectfully addressed him as 'senior'.

"For you to address me as senior apprentice-brother...sounds really awkward," Ning said.

"The two of you can address each other as you please." Subhuti smiled as he looked at his two disciples. He was in an excellent mood today. Ji Ning's rate of advancement was absolutelyastounding, and Redsnow was going to be the heir to Subhuti's most powerful arts.

Subhuti laughed, "Ji Ning has been my disciple for quite a few years, now...but I imagine that he doesn't even know how powerful his other

fellow disciples are.”

“I truly do not know,” Ning admitted respectfully.

He knew that his master had a total of nineteen disciples. If Redsnow was included, then the total was twenty.

Ning knew of the names of every single fellow disciple, starting from their eldest apprentice-brother, but he didn’t know exactly how strong each of them were.

“Ji Ning, you have grown in power. As for Redsnow, he’s just a step away from becoming a Daofather. I continue to feel as though this great storm is hiding many mysteries within it; you fellow disciples will need to help each other and support each other,” Subhuti said. “Of my many disciples, a total of four have reached the True God or Daofather level.”

“Four?” Ning and Redsnow were both shocked.

“The first is my eldest disciple,” Subhuti said, “Which is to say, the wood-chopping ‘Woodcutter’ who lives in the mountains out back. If you ever have any questions regarding cultivation, you can go ask him about them. Without any question, he is the most powerful figure amongst my disciples.”

“The second is my second disciple, the guardian of the Three Realms Palace, the one who is always napping; Crazy Ji.” Subhuti continued, “Crazy Ji can be considered the disciple who has truly inherited my many techniques and is most like myself. Buddhist techniques, Daoist techniques...he’s learned them all. If you have any questions, you can also ask him about them.”

“The third is my sixth disciple, the one who created and is the master of the Flower-Fruit Mountain world, Sun Wukong,” Subhuti said. “He once was provided guidance by Mother Nuwa, and he is extremely skilled in combat.”

“The final one is my twelfth disciple, Blacktiger. He loves to roam about the Three Realms. He has not established a major world of his own, has few subordinates, and is the weakest of the four...but he’s still at the True

God/Daofather level. He has such a lazy, slothful disposition that I only accepted him as my disciple due to ties of karmic destiny that existed between us...but who would've thought that he'd reach the Daofather level as well?"

Subhuti introduced all four Daofathers under his tutelage in one breath.

Ning was shocked.

Blacktiger?

Twelfth apprentice-brother Blacktiger referred to himself as 'Great King Blacktiger'. When Ning had been studying and training at Mount Innerheart, Blacktiger had actually come to visit him and had even sparred with him. Ning had never imagined or had any inkling at all as to how powerful this man really was! The feeling that Blacktiger had given him was that he wasn't even as powerful as Silvermoon. Who would've thought that was all just a show...that he was at the True God/Daofather level!

"The other disciples, including Ji Ning, are all at the Empyrean God/True Immortal level," Subhuti said. "The two of you must not be lazy. The great storm has descended upon us; if you can train to the True God/Daofather level, you'll have a greater chance of surviving it."

"Your disciple understands," Ji Ning and Redsnow said respectfully.

"Good." Subhuti nodded, then smiled. "You now know how powerful your fellow disciples are. As for some of the secrets of the Three Realms... Redsnow may know a few, but because Ji Ning was previously weak, I hadn't spoken to him about them. Let me narrate some of them in detail. I will tell you what happened during the destruction of the Primordial Era. I trust that after you listen to me, you'll fully understand what the Seamless Gate truly is."

Ning and Redsnow both listened attentively. Not even Redsnow knew much about the war which destroyed the Primordial Era.

Chapter 2: The Secret History of the Three Realms (2)

A reminiscent look was in Subhuti's eyes. He said softly, "Let us start the tale from the dawn of the primordial chaos. Long ago, before the Primordial Era began, our 'Three Realms' was located in a region of complete primordial chaos. The primordial chaos, in and of itself, is an incomparably marvelous thing. It began to give birth to Elder Gods, True Gods, and Empyrean Gods. Due to them having been birthed within the primordial chaos, they styled themselves the same way, calling themselves the 'Elder Gods of Primordial Chaos' and so on."

"Elder Gods?" Ji Ning was instantly stunned by his master's words.

"The Daos contained within this region consisted of ten Heavenly Daos, eighty-one Grand Daos, and 108,000 lesser Daos." Subhuti continued, "The ten great Elder Gods were born with control over a Heavenly Dao."

"Pangu, born with control over the Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos."

"Nuwa, born with control over the Heavenly Dao of Life."

"Fuxi, born with control over the Heavenly Dao of Destruction."

"The Phoenix, born with control over the Heavenly Dao of Yin." 1

"The Ancestor Dragon, born with control over the Heavenly Dao of Yang."

"As for the Heavenly Daos of the Five Elements, they were controlled by Firegod Zhurong, Watergod Gonggong, Metalgod Rushou, Woodgod Jumang, and Earthgod Houtu."

"These ten were all born with innate control over the Heavenly Daos. Pangu was the greatest of them!" 2

Subhuti looked towards Ji Ning. "Disciple, you seem to have many questions for me."

"Yes. Elder Gods...your disciples has never heard of such a thing." Ning was stunned. "Your disciple always believed that the True God level

represented a limit.”

“Very few in the Three Realms know of them, and I’ll explain the reason for that later. Pangu, Nuwa, and the others are not like us. They were born with control over the Heavenly Daos, and they are innately more powerful than us,” Subhuti said. “In addition to them, the primordial chaos also gave birth to powerful True Gods who were born with control over a Grand Dao! I was one of them, as were Threelives, Crimsonbright, Daoist Three Purities, Lord Tathagata the Buddha, and the Welcomer Buddha. All of them are True Gods.”

“On a still lower level were the 108,000 Empyrean Gods who were born with control over an ordinary Dao.”

Subhuti continued, “These are the Elder Gods, True Gods, and Empyrean Gods who were born from the primordial chaos.”

“The most exalted and most powerful of the gods was Pangu, born with control over the Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos. Although Pangu was extremely powerful...the invisible hands and machinations of fate worked through him.” Subhuti let out a sigh. “He was born with the destiny of establishing our world. He was the last to be born, and when he emerged from the primordial chaos, he came out with his great Pangu Axe in hand. He cleaved apart the primordial chaos itself, separating Heaven from Earth, burning up his very lifeforce and dying in the process. As a result... the utterly enormous Primordial Pangu’s World was created.”

“After being established...the Primordial Pangu’s World began to give birth to many different lifeforms, all of whom were born from Heaven and Earth. The strongest were born at the Empyrean God level, while the weakest were at least at the Xiantian level.”

Ning listened carefully.

“Heaven and Earth gave birth to so many incomparably exquisite things. Those of us who emerged from the primordial chaos were filled with curiosity towards this new world.” Subhuti sighed. “Some of us took over territories for our own use, while others went into seclusion. As Pangu’s World gave birth to more and more living creatures, the world itself

became an increasingly exciting place to be in. People like Threelives began to create their own kingdoms, as did several of the Elder Gods...and thus war began to erupt, with many being slain.

Ning nodded.

It was very common for wars to erupt due to conflicting ambitions.

“The various major powers even created Ki Refining techniques for the countless living creatures of Pangu’s World,” Subhuti said. “In fact, Tathagata even created a completely separate system called ‘Buddhism’, which in reality can be considered a variation on the Ki Refining system. The various True Gods such as myself and Tathagata then were able to train to become Daofathers, using the Ki Refining techniques we developed.”

“Mother Nuwa was the first to break through,” Subhuti said. “Mother Nuwa possessed tremendous willpower and wisdom. After gaining insights into the Heavenly Daos of Yin and Yang, her power instantly increased explosively, and she then created the human race. Only then did all the major powers of the Primordial Era understand that one’s power could increase to a higher level once one comprehended a set of Heavenly Daos.”

“And so, the major powers of Pangu’s World all began to focus on training...but they then discovered that once you mastered a particular Heavenly Dao, mastering the opposite Heavenly Dao would be incredibly difficult. For example, if someone who had already mastered the Heavenly Dao of Life wished to then meditate on its opposite, the Heavenly Dao of Destruction, the Heavenly Dao of Life itself would forcefully disturb him. There was simply no way to gain insights at all.”

“For a very long period of time, no one aside from Mother Nuwa was capable of gaining insights into a matching set of Heavenly Daos.”

“But then...Daoist Three Purities appeared.”

“Daoist Three Purities was born a True God of Primordial Chaos; his original name was Yuanshi! He was extremely talented, managing to first master the Heavenly Dao of Yang, then the Heavenly Dao of Destruction.

However, he was never able to succeed in mastering the Heavenly Dao of Yin or the Heavenly Dao of Life, the complimentary Daos to what he already had. And so...he steeled his mind and made a major decision."

"He killed himself."

"Killed himself?!" Ning was stunned.

The nearby Redsnow, however, simply smiled. Although this was a secret, Redsnow had been born when Pangu's World had been created, and had followed Daoist Threelives for many years. He knew many things, including this story.

"Daoist Three Purities set down a seal upon his own truesoul, a seal that would lock away his former memories unless he mastered either the Heavenly Dao of Yin or the Heavenly Dao of Life," Subhuti said. "And then, Daoist Three Purities entered the paths of reincarnation, then killed himself. Because he died within the paths of reincarnation, his truesoul was naturally sent straight into the cycle of reincarnation."

"This was a huge gamble."

"If Daoist Three Purities' soul was shattered in his next life, then his truesoul would be sent to the River of Destiny. He would be finished," Subhuti said.

Ning nodded.

To seal away one's memories unless one mastered either the Heavenly Dao of Yin or the Heavenly Dao of Life. In other words...unless he became a Daofather once more, there would be no way for him to reawaken his memories from the past. But how incredibly difficult would it have to be for one to become a Daofather once more, without any past memories at all? Even though one might be incredibly talented due to the quality of one's truesoul, the path of cultivation was an incredibly dangerous one.

Once one was killed and one's soul was shattered, everything would be over.

"He failed numerous times. He was reincarnated a total of nine times," Subhuti said. "Of his nine reincarnations, six of them were as ordinary

mortals who didn't even embark on the path of cultivation. Thus, upon dying he was naturally sent to be reincarnated once more. In two other lives, he died at the Zifu level and was once more sent to be reincarnated. Finally, during his ninth life, he was reborn as a member of the primordial human clan...Laozi!"

In this life, he was an absolutely dazzling figure. He advanced at an absolutely breakneck pace, and because his memories of his past life were unable to disturb him, he was able to train all the way to become a Daofather through mastering the Heavenly Dao of Yin. Only then did his former memories awakened...and both the Heavenly Daos of Yin and Yang were now under his control. His power instantly exploded!"

"He then devised the Three Pure Ones technique, becoming so powerful that even Mother Nuwa might not have been a match for him at that point in time. He essentially became the number one leader of the entire Primordial Era. Because Yuanshi had devised the Three Pure Ones technique, he gave himself the title 'Daoist Three Purities'. He then established the Daoist Path, passing down many Daoist techniques and becoming the leader of the Daoist Path."

Ning was stunned by what he heard.

"Because his memories were masked during the reincarnation process, he was able to gain insights into a complimentary Heavenly Dao without being impacted by his original Heavenly Dao. But this was a gamble. If his soul was shattered, he would have truly perished." Subhuti sighed.

"Because of Daoist Three Purities, there were a total of six Daofathers who also committed suicide after setting down seals upon their truesouls."

"But...there has never been any word of them since. From the Primordial Era to the modern day, there has never been any traces of them," Subhuti said. "Perhaps they have died...or perhaps they are continuing to pass through the endless cycle of reincarnation."

Ning sighed to himself.

Nonstop reincarnation?

Those Daofathers who committed suicide all had extraordinary

truesouls; their talent had to be extraordinary as well. As long as they had a chance to embark on the Immortal path, they undoubtedly would...but the Immortal path was an extremely deadly one. One might be slain by an enemy, resulting in one's soul being shattered and dispersed! An extremely long period of time had passed since the Primordial Era. Those six Daofathers were most likely long deceased, their souls having entered the endless River of Destiny.

“After the six of them disappeared, a very long period of time passed with no other major powers deciding to reincarnate themselves. However...all the major powers had hearts that were focused on the Dao, and all of them wished to grow more powerful.” Subhuti sighed. “And so, Buddha Tathagata, then an ordinary figure amongst major powers, sent himself into the paths of reincarnation, killing himself and being reincarnated anew. Back then, Tathagata had already mastered four of the Heavenly Daos of the Five Elements. All he needed to do was master the Heavenly Dao of Earth, but he could not; whenever he tried, the other four Heavenly Daos would disturb him.”

“A crazy man can get crazy results.” Subhuti shook his head and sighed. “On Tathagata's third reincarnation, he became the prince of a small human kingdom. His name was Sakyamuni. He was naturally a brilliant, dazzling figure...and in the end, he mastered the Heavenly Dao of Earth and became a Daofather. His former memories were awakened, and the Buddhists, previously just one of many organizations within Pangu's World, instantly skyrocketed in power. Tathagata thus became the leader of the Buddhist Sangha.”

“You have now heard the tales of how the leaders of the Daoist Path and the Buddhist Sangha rose to power. What do you think?” Subhuti looked towards Ning.

“Incredible determination. Incredible willpower.” Ning sighed in amazement.

Those two had already been Daofathers to begin with. They could live eternal, careless lives of freedom...but both of them had hearts that were extremely focused upon the Dao. For the sake of gaining a higher level of

enlightenment, they were willing to wager their eternal lives!

They had won their bets...but many other Daofathers had lost.

To train in the Dao to a higher level...it was far, far too difficult.

“Back then, the Primordial Era was an era of nonstop war,” Subhuti said. “The most powerful actors were the kingdoms that were controlled by a few of the Elder Gods.”

“Once, a war erupted between the kingdoms led by the Elder God of Water, Gonggong, and the Elder God of Fire, Zhurong. These two Elder Gods began to battle with reckless abandon atop Pangu’s World. Gonggong, seeing that his forces were about to be defeated, went completely berserk. The crazed Gonggong, in his madness and fury, actually rammed against and shattered Mount Buzhou, which Pangu had used as a pillar to hold up the heavens.”

“As a result...the heavens themselves were shattered. The very foundation of Pangu’s World was in danger.”

“Heaven and Earth began to tremble, as though the end times had come.”

“Both Gonggong and Zhurong panicked. All the major powers of the Primordial Era gathered together, wanting to stop the destruction of the world, but none of them had any solutions. In the end, it was Mother Nuwa who saved us. At such a critical moment, she actually made yet another breakthrough, resulting in her gaining complete mastery over the Heavenly Daos of the Five Elements. She gathered together the essence of the Five Elements from Heaven and Earth, then created a divine five-colored stone which she used to repair the hole in the skies. Only after she did so did Heaven and Earth slowly return to normal. Since she was now a master of Yin, Yang, and the Five Elements, she became the indisputably most powerful figure of the Primordial Era. Because Nuwa healed the heavens and saved the world, everyone in the Primordial Era would respectfully refer to her as ‘Mother’.”

“Mother Nuwa was extremely close to Elder God Fuxi, who was like a brother to her. He disliked battle, but he saw Mother Nuwa making

constant breakthroughs while his own power barely budged. As a result... he committed suicide and threw himself into the cycle of reincarnation. He sealed away his memories, which would only be awakened once he mastered the Heavenly Dao of Life.” Subhuti shook his head. “He was reborn as a human, and he became one of the Three Emperors of Mankind of the Primordial Era, Fuxi. But to this very day, he has yet to awaken his former memories.”

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1. Readers may be surprised that the phoenix has control over ‘Yin’, when it is normally considered a creature of fire. The answer is that in traditional Chinese culture, the phoenix is the ultimate symbol of femininity, with the dragon being the ultimate symbol of masculinity.
2. Every single one of the deities listed here come from actual Chinese myths and legends.

Chapter 3: The Secret History of the Three Realms (3)

“After Fuxi was reincarnated as a human, he ended up mastering the Heavenly Daos of Yin and Yang, gaining inconceivable amounts of insight into the art of formations. To this very day, he remains the most skilled formations expert of the entire Three Realms,” Subhuti said. “However... although his power has reached an incomparably frightening level, he’s never been able to regain his memories, because he still has yet to comprehend the Heavenly Dao of Life.”

Ji Ning let out a sigh. The man had already mastered two Heavenly Daos, but he still wasn’t able to awaken his memories? The will of Heaven truly did toy with men and Immortals alike.

“In truth...since, he was once an Elder God with an incomparably powerful body, his current level of power is most likely roughly on par with his former level of power as an Elder God.” Subhuti said. “This reincarnation...I don’t know if it was a good thing for Fuxi or not.”

“In any event, the Primordial Era persisted for a very long period of time. Some focused on the Dao, while others focused on warfare and killing. The human race rose to sudden prominence, then began to face one war after another. Many major powers died, and even more Empyrean Gods died.” Subhuti shook his head and sighed, a look of sadness and pity in his eyes. “Because of ambition...multiple Elder Gods died as well. Even the most powerful force of the Primordial Era, the dragon race, fell into darkness due to the death of the Ancestor Dragon.”

“The Ancestor Dragon is dead?” Ning cried out in shock. The Ancestor Dragon was one of the ten great Elder Gods!

From what his master was saying, Elder Gods all had incomparably mighty bodies and were similar to the Human Emperors and the leaders of Buddhism and Daoism in power.

“Not just the Ancestor Dragon. The Elder God of Metal, Rushou, was

killed in battle as well!" Subhuti shook his head. "That's the nature of war...and when there are no outside threats, internal wars will become particularly vicious."

"Internal wars?" Ning was startled. "Master, are you saying...?"

"Internal wars?" The nearby Empyrean God Redsnow, who had been listening quietly this entire time, was startled as well.

If the many battles that went on during this period of time were 'internal wars', then...

"During the Primordial Era, when Shennong wandered the primordial chaos in search of precious materials, he ended up discovering an alien lifeform within it," Subhuti said solemnly.

"Alien lifeform?" Ning and Redsnow were both shocked.

"The primordial chaos is vast and infinite. You must understand that all the Elder Gods themselves were born from it...which means that it naturally is capable of giving birth to other creatures as well." Subhuti let out a sigh. "The alien accidentally discovered us...but fortunately, Shennong discovered it as well and ensured it wouldn't be able to infiltrate us."

"The alien was incomparably vicious and frenzied in its assaults. It immediately launched a war against our primordial world," Subhuti said. "I imagine both of you have heard of this alien's name before. His name... was Rahu! He was the first Outsider who came to us from the primordial chaos."

"The first?" Ning and Redsnow instantly understood. Most likely, more Outsiders had come from the primordial chaos as well.

"Rahu was absolutely berserk. He boasted to us, 'I, Rahu, have roamed the primordial chaos for eons. Do you think I will fear the puny denizens of a backwaters chaosworld?'" Subhuti shook his head. "We instantly understood that there had to be other powerful creatures living within the primordial chaos as well. Rahu was just one of them. Rahu didn't really get a full picture of our world's power before launching a war against us."

Thus, even though he was completely berserk, he was still defeated.”

“Back then...with but the wave of his hand, Rahu was able to manifest a vast, massive army.”

“He himself was a bit more powerful than even the likes of the Human Emperors or the Buddhist and Daoist leaders. Only Mother Nuwa was a match for him! However, we managed to win through sheer numbers, grinding him down and killing him,” Subhuti said. “After Rahu died, we used his shattered body as ingredients for forging many treasures. Your Rahu Bow, Ji Ning, was one of those treasures. Although most of them were initially just top-grade Pure Yang treasures when first created, more than 90% have evolved to become Protocosmic spirit-treasures by now.”

“Rahu’s arrival caused the entire primordial world to be shocked into wakefulness.”

“We thought to ourselves, ‘So, aside from us...there actually are other living creatures within the primordial chaos as well, some of whom possess tremendous power.’”

“Thus...the Primordial Era began to stabilize. The many frenzied wars began to come to an end, and in fact we began to feel regret for what we did. So many major powers had been killed in our internal wars, all for the sake of foolish ambition. Because the human race had their three Emperors of Mankind, and because the various other races no longer wished to engage in internal squabbling...mankind ended up becoming the leader of the races.”

“Time flowed on, and countless eras went by.”

“Finally...yet another storm arrived.” Subhuti said solemnly, “Countless major powers, including both Mother Nuwa and myself, sensed an incomparably powerful force drawing close to our primordial world. Thus...we went into the primordial chaos, moving towards that force to investigate it.”

“After travelling through the primordial chaos for more than half a month...we finally discovered what that force was!” A hint of grief and pain could be seen in Subhuti’s eyes.

Ning and Redsnow both continued to listen carefully.

“It was an absolutely massive, ellipsoid world...a chaosworld that was almost the same as our Pangu’s World!” Subhuti said heavily.

“What?!”

“A chaosworld, just like Pangu’s World?!”

Ning and Redsnow both called out in shock.

Subhuti looked at the two of them. “Since Pangu was able to cleave apart the primordial chaos to establish Heaven and Earth in creating his Pangu’s World...why wouldn’t there be others within the infinite primordial chaos that could do the same?”

Ning and Redsnow were instantly rendered speechless.

“That other world also had its Elder Gods! However, in order to differentiate them from us, we referred to them as Fiends. We called them Elder Fiends, True Fiends, and Empyrean Fiends!” Subhuti said heavily, “As for that world itself..we referred to it as the Seamless Chaosworld.”

“Seamless Chaosworld?” Both Ning and Redsnow were stunned.

Seamless?

Seamless Gate?

“Right. The modern ‘Seamless Gate’ originated from the Seamless Chaosworld.” Subhuti nodded. “The Seamless Chaosworld and our Pangu’s Chaosworld...these two chaosworlds were continuing to move through the primordial chaos, drawing closer and closer to each other. There would come a day in which the two chaosworlds would smash into each other.”

“In fact, as our two worlds drew closer...the major powers of both sides could subconsciously sense that the hands of fate were working to fuse the two worlds together into a single, massive chaosworld.”

“The Seamless Chaosworld was different from our world,” Subhuti said. “In our Pangu’s Chaosworld...because Mother Nuwa was a transcendent figure who rarely got involved in worldly matters, we ended up having

many internal wars and many casualties. The most powerful member of the Seamless Chaosworld, however, was the Elder Fiend of the Heart, Demonheart. This demon possessed tremendous ambition, and he had long ago taken over the entire Seamless Chaosworld with his unmatched power.”

“Back then, they had five Elder Fiends of Earth, Fire, Water, Wind, and Heart! They also had two other Daofather-level figures who were as powerful as the likes of Daoist Three Purities! Patriarch Demonheart in particular...he was very close to Pangu’s level of power. Not even Mother Nuwa was a match for him.”

“Our side had suffered heavy losses due to our years of internal struggles.”

“They actually had even more True Gods than us. Too many of ours had died in our internal wars.”

“In truth, they were more powerful than us! Given Patriarch Demonheart’s ambitions...he naturally wanted to take control over the fused chaosworld, but those of us from Pangu’s Chaosworld naturally wouldn’t agree! And so...war began!”

“Pangu’s Chaosworld against the Seamless Chaosworld...a war that shattered the heavens!”

“However, right at this critical moment, a terrifying figure appeared...the Lord of All Things!” Subhuti was deathly serious now. “The Lord of All Things was and remains the most terrifyingly powerful Outsider from the primordial chaos that Pangu’s Chaosworld and the Seamless Chaosworld have ever encountered. In fact, the reason why our two chaosworlds were slowly moving closer to each other was because of his secret machinations.”

Ning and Redsnow felt their hearts clench.

“After both chaosworlds had suffered tremendous casualties during the war...the grand army of the Lord of All Things appeared.” Subhuti continued, “The reason why he was known as the ‘Lord of All Things’ was precisely because he had reached an unfathomable level of expertise in

making use of the various materials of the universe. In fact, the entire Dao of Constructs originally stemmed from him!”

“The Lord of All Things had an enormous number of golems under his command, many of which were at the Daofather level of power.”

“In addition, he also had a large number of Queen Mothers under his command. These were the same as the creatures you encountered within the Nihilum Zone, capable of giving birth to countless powerful soldiers. When all of the soldiers joined together into armies, each of them had the combat power of a Daofather.”

“His personal power, however, was actually just on par with the likes of Daoist Three Purities or Tathagata. However, the Lord of All Things had even altered his own body. It was quite unique, because it was simply unbreakable!”

“The sudden arrival of the Lord of All Things, along with his grand army that was comparable to the total power of either chaosworld...it was a calamity.”

“However, right at that critical moment, Mother Nuwa made her breakthrough.”

“A qualitative breakthrough!”

“She broke through to Pangu’s level, and she instantly began to massacre our enemies. The Lord of All Things was slain, while Patriarch Demonheart was forced to hide by merging his body into the Heavenly Daos. The Seamless Gate had already suffered enormous casualties during the war, and the survivors were absolutely butchered by Mother Nuwa. The only one who managed to escape from her hands was Patriarch Windfiend, who was second in power only to Patriarch Demonheart. He even managed to rescue many of the major powers of the Seamless Gate as well. Fortunately, the first person Mother Nuwa acted against was Patriarch Demonheart; otherwise, Patriarch Windfiend probably would’ve been able to rescue him and save him as well. His fleeing abilities truly were incredible.”

“Patriarch Windfiend?” Ning and Redsnow both memorized this name.

Anyone who could flee from Mother Nuwa and save so many other major powers as well was worth of them memorizing.

“Patriarch Windfiend is now respectfully referred to by the Seamless Gate as the Lord of All Fiends. His power is truly unfathomable!” Subhuti exclaimed.

“That apocalyptic war...it caused the two chaosworlds that were about to fuse together to instead completely shatter apart. The largest remnant piece is now known as the ‘Primordial Ruinworld’, while the other pieces became the Celestial Realm, the Netherworld Kingdom, the three thousand major worlds, and the trillion minor worlds,” Subhuti said. “As for the soldiers and the army left behind by the Outsider, the Lord of All Things...some of them were slain by Mother Nuwa, but most of them ended up being driven into the Primordial Ruinworld.”

“The remnants of his army didn’t pose a major threat to us. Rather than get rid of them, we left them there as a warning and a reminder,” Subhuti said solemnly. “We were to never forget that the primordial chaos still contains other living creatures. We simply can’t afford to engage in internal wars of attrition any longer.”

“The Three Realms were formed.”

“Later on, for an extremely urgent reason, Mother Nuwa left us and entered the primordial chaos, never to return.”

“After Mother Nuwa left...Patriarch Windfiend came back, bringing the many major powers of the Seamless Chaosworld with him.” Subhuti shook his head. “He was simply too difficult to deal with, and his forces weren’t weak. Since we were worried about the threat which Outsiders posed, and since Patriarch Windfiend wasn’t confident that he could defeat us...our two sides came to an accord.”

“Ever since then, we have had no further quarrels with the Seamless.”

“There are many living creatures within the Three Realms which have the blood of gods in them, while others have the blood of fiends within them. In truth, since both our world and the Seamless world were both chaosworlds, there wasn’t that much of a difference between us. Thus, we

simply referred to these creatures as 'Fiendgods'."

"As for those who were born from Primordial Chaos? They were jointly referred to as Fiendgods of Primordial Chaos."

"Strictly speaking, though...those of us from Pangu's World should be referred to as Empyrean Gods and True Gods of Primordial Chaos, while those of the Seamless Gate should be referred to as Empyrean Fiends and True Fiends of Primordial Chaos."

Subhuti continued, "Countless years passed. The Three Realms gave birth to many more major powers, and the Three Realms once more began to flourish and grow. However...not too long ago, all the major powers began to subconsciously sense that an unavoidable war was going to erupt between our side and the Seamless side."

"All major powers possess fairly formidable subconscious senses towards fate, as you know. We could sense that if we tried to avoid the war...the result would be death!"

Ning and Redsnow now completely understood.

So the Seamless Gate had originated from a separate chaosworld.

"The whispers of fate and destiny are never wrong." Subhuti shook his head. "Although all of us have many suspicions...we can clearly sense that the Nuwa Alliance will only be able to survive if we annihilate the Seamless Gate."

"Master." Ning couldn't but interject, "The Nuwa Alliance belongs to Pangu's Chaosworld, while the Seamless Alliance comes from a separate one. Why, then, are people like Old Man Yuan hesitant?"

"Hmph."

Suhbuti said coldly, "They are a pack of fools! Both of our sides have shared the Three Realms for countless years now, and many of the major powers on both sides have become very close friends with each other. There are countless 'Fiendgods' amongst the many races. In truth, both sides all but merged together long ago...and so Old Man Yuan and his ilk still wish for both sides to peacefully coexist. They view the Seamless as

being brothers and are unwilling to become enemies to them.”

“But the whispers of fate definitely can’t be wrong.”

“I am absolutely certain that we can only survive if we wipe out the Seamless Gate. In turn, the Seamless Gate is also absolutely certain that they can only survive if they wipe us out. Although there are many things we do not understand with regards to this great tribulation...fate always points and guides us towards the correct path.”

Subhuti looked at the two men before him. “Ji Ning. Redsnow. The two of you are still weak; you need to continue training for now. After all...even if we manage to survive this storm, it’s very possible than yet another Outsider like the Lord of All Things will appear, causing yet another tribulation to descend.”

“Understood.” Both Ning and Redsnow were very solemn.

Outsiders from the primordial chaos?

Other chaosworlds?

Why had Mother Nuwa entered the primordial chaos, never to return?

These questions caused Ning and Redsnow to understand that in the past, they had been like frogs within a well, unable to see the greater world outside. In truth...the heavens were far vaster than they had imagined them to be!

Having concluded his tale of the secret history of the Three Realms, Subhuti let out a smile. “Right. Ji Ning, I understand you have a daughter with you. Show her to me.”

“Yes, Master.” When Ning thought of his daughter, his heart instantly turned warm. He immediately willed for his daughter Brightmoon to emerge from the world of the Violetdawn Pearl.

“Eh?!”

The barefoot Brightmoon nibbled on her fingers as she curiously stared at her surroundings.

“Father.” Brightmoon instantly wrapped her arms around Ning’s thigh.

“Brightmoon, come here. Kowtow and show your respects to the Old Patriarch,” Ning instructed.

Brightmoon’s eyes instantly turned huge. She stared carefully at the ruddy-faced, white-bearded old man, then obediently fell to her knees and kowtowed. “Brightmoon greets you, Old Patriarch.”

“Hahaha...” Subhuti was greatly pleased by what he saw. Laughing, he said, “Your father is my disciple, and so you can be considered a member of Mount Innerheart as well. Thus, I shall transmit Fiendgod Body Refining techniques and Ki Refining techniques to you.”

He pointed towards her. Swish! Instantly, a streak of light flew straight into Brightmoon’s forehead.

“Thank you, Master!” Ning was overjoyed. At present, there were very few things capable of making Ning happy, and the person he cared most about was this precious daughter of his. Mount Innerheart’s rules were very strict, so Ning didn’t dare to casually teach her any of the techniques he had learned here, but the other techniques he had weren’t particularly elite.

“If your daughter can overcome her tribulation and become a Celestial Immortal or Empyrean God, I’ll give her another give. Alright, you can leave now.” Subhuti waved his arm. “Redsnow, you stay for now.”

“Yes.” Both Ning and Redsnow assented.

Ning immediately picked up his daughter, who had fallen into a dazed, sleep-like state. Subhuti had transmitted a veritable ocean of techniques to her, and there was a limit to how much she could process.

In the following days, they remained at Mount Innerheart. Ning lived a peaceful life here, along with his daughter. Only when he was with his daughter would the pain in his heart be slightly alleviated. Slowly, Ning’s heart grew calmer and calmer. He was quietly preparing, because he could sense that the day of his tribulation was drawing closer and closer.

“Father.” Brightmoon came running towards him.

“Brightmoon.” Ning smiled at her.

“Father, I heard you are about to undergo your Empyrean Tribulation?” Brightmoon raised her head to look at the nearby Uncle White. “Grandpa White, my father is going to undergo his Empyrean Tribulation?”

“Who told you?!” Ning asked.

“Everyone in Mount Innerheart knows about it,” Brightmoon immediately said.

“My fellow disciples really are blabbermouths.” Ning shook his head helplessly, then looked at Brightmoon and nodded. “Yes. Tomorrow, I shall undergo the Empyrean Tribulation.”

Chapter 4: Empyrean God Tribulation

“I heard that the Empyrean Tribulation is very dangerous.” Brightmoon was very worried. Her two hands were clenched tightly in front of her chest.

Ji Ning bent downwards, gently taking his daughter into his arms. He looked at her face, then smiled. “Brightmoon, don’t worry. The Empyrean Tribulation might be dangerous to others, but to me, your father...it’s really nothing.”

“Really?” Brightmoon hesitated.

“Really. You have to trust Father,” Ning said.

“Alright.” Brightmoon reached out with her little hands to hug Ning’s head. “Father, Mother’s gone. I don’t want you to leave me too.”

Ning felt his heart ache.

Brightmoon was still very young. Yu Wei’s death had an enormous impact on her.

“Father will never, ever leave you, Brightmoon.” Ning held his daughter in his arms, then whispered to her, “Father will always protect you.”

This was Ning’s promise to his daughter!

That night, Brightmoon slept by Ning’s side. She was afraid that Ning was going to leave her and go take on the Empyrean Tribulation by himself, and she insisted on personally watching him undergo it. Only then would she feel at ease.

“Time to get up.” Ning tweaked his slumbering daughter’s little nose.

“Ungh...” Brightmoon struggled to open her eyes, then gazed blankly at her surroundings for a moment. Clearly, she hadn’t fully woken up yet, but upon seeing Ning she couldn’t help but reach out to hug him.

“Time to get up. It’s already bright outside.” Ning gave his daughter a little kiss on the face.

“Oh.” Brightmoon rubbed her eyes, then sat up and looked towards the

outside. It was early dawn right now, and the skies were slowly brightening. “Ah?! Father, you are going to undergo your Empyrean Tribulation today.”

“Right...so hurry up and get up.”

Outside the room.

The Whitewater Hound and Little Qing had been waiting here for some time now. Upon hearing the playful voices coming from within the room, they couldn't help but reveal smiles.

“These days, Master only ever laughs when he's with little Brightmoon,” Little Qing said.

“He's redirected all the love he felt towards Yu Wei and his parents to that little girl.” The Whitewater Hound let out a sigh. “Fortunately, Yu Wei gave birth before it all happened. Otherwise...I really can't imagine what my son Ning would be like right now, after suffering such heavy blows.”

Creaaaak.

The door to the room swung open.

A handsome, slender white-robed youth walked out, leading an adorable little girl by the hand. The handsome youth looked young, but his calm, sea-deep eyes seemed to hold infinity within them. Everyone understood that he was no longer young. His heart, in particularly...would no longer be young again.

“Let's go,” Ning said.

“Right.” Uncle White and Little Qing followed behind Ning. Right after they emerged from the courtyard, they saw Bluecliff Xiaoyu waiting outside.

“Master,” Xiaoyu called out respectfully.

Holding his daughter Brightmoon's hand, Ning led Uncle White, Little Qing, and Xiaoyu out of Mount Innerheart. He then used a spatial teleportation to arrive at a vast, desolate area within the Crescent world.

A large group of people had already gathered in this location.

“Junior apprentice-brother.”

“Ji Ning.”

“Young master.”

Redsnow and the rest of the seven Empyrean Gods, Silvermoon, Lord Jiang, Crazy Ji, and the others had all arrived. They had even brought their disciples and grand-disciples with them.

After landing, Ning waved his hand. Autumn Leaf, Mu Northson, and several others suddenly appeared next to him.

“Junior apprentice-brother, you have to be careful. Although the Empyrean Tribulation won’t be too hard for you, it’s still good to be careful,” Crazy Ji instructed.

“Don’t worry at all, second apprentice-brother.” Ning nodded, then walked by himself to a nearby location. He only took three steps, but moved a total of three thousand meters away.

Then...he just silently stood there.

Boom!

His [Crimsonbright Diagram of the Nine Heavens] energy had been forcibly barred at the seventeenth stage for a long time now. It was ready to break through at any moment...and now, it broke through the final bottleneck to enter the eighteenth stage! At the same time, Ning’s true body also broke through to the peak of the Void level as a Ki Refiner!

As he simultaneously broke through in both aspects, the Heavenly Daos immediately began to activate and take effect.

A short while later...a wind began to arise around him.

“His tribulation has started.”

“Master really is quite straightforward. As soon as he arrived, he immediately initiated his tribulation.”

“Junior apprentice-brother is formidable and has experienced extraordinary things. His Empyrean Tribulation will most likely be

similarly extraordinary.”

The crowd watched from far away with nervousness, especially Brightmoon. Her two little hands were so tightly clenched that her nails were white. She chewed on her lips as she stared at Ning. She was afraid... afraid that her father would disappear as well.

Far away, in the distant wilderness, stood an old man and a woodcutter.

Nobody was able to detect their presence. Not even Crazy Ji noticed them.

“Tell me...do you think your junior apprentice-brother will succeed?” Subhuti asked.

“The Empyrean Tribulation? No question about it. The only question in my mind is, during his nine nine-sets of thunder tribulation, will the ‘Pure Yang Goldlight Thunder’ appear?” The woodcutter chuckled.

“Pure Yang Goldlight Thunder? Hrm...it has indeed been a long, long time since it last appeared. From the Primordial Era to the modern day, the number of times it has appeared has been pitifully low. If it does appear...although it will pose a major threat, it’ll also allow your junior apprentice-brother to possess an even more perfect Empyrean God body,” Subhuti said.

Wind. Fire. Thunder. These three tribulations served to temper the body!

Ki Refiners generally would gain a Celestial Immortal body when they succeeded.

As for Fiendgod Body Refiners, their Empyrean Tribulations would generally be much more powerful than the ones the Ki Refiners faced. When they succeeded, however, they would gain the body of an Empyrean God!

The more powerful the Empyrean Tribulation, the more perfect an Empyrean God body one would possess.

There were differences in power amongst Empyrean Gods as well, after all. For some weak Empyrean Gods, countless eons would be needed for their

bodies to train to the peak of power. The quality of an Empyrean God body was one of the factors that determined if one would be able to become a True God or not.

Rumble...

A wild wind began to howl as countless wind-blades swirled together into an enormous vortex, with Ji Ning standing at the very heart of it.

“Terrifying.”

“The wind tribulation alone is even more terrifying than the nine nine-sets of thunder tribulation which his Primaltwin endured.” The distant viewers had strange looks on their faces. The power of this wind was simply too terrifying.

Even for Ning, his Ki Refiner techniques were useless right now. He was completely relying on the Sixth Cycle of his [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] to defend.

He stood there in the the center of the wind vortex, staring at the skies in a very calm manner.

Whoosh...

The final burst of invisible Empyrean God Wind arrived, entering through his head and spreading out throughout his body, causing every single part of it to shudder. His heart, however, was as calm as water. He wasn't moved even slightly. While shuddering and trembling, Ning's divine body began to soundlessly evolve. This evolution wasn't particularly noteworthy, however; only when the thunder tribulation ended would his body truly undergo a qualitative change.

“The wind tribulation is over.” Ning raised his head to look at the sky as he murmured softly to himself.

An enormous, scorchingly hot cloud had appeared in the air above him. This spinning cloud was covered with a layer of golden flame that was visible to the naked eye. As the cloud descended, the temperature in the surrounding area began to drastically rise.

“Activate.” The distant Crazy Ji immediately waved the ragged fan he was holding, and a blurry azure light arose to surround the spectators, protecting all of them.

Everything in the wilderness around Ning, however, was instantly charred. In fact, everything began to transform into dust as the cloud of fire continued to descend. The ground itself began to disappear beneath Ning, who simply stood there in the air, staring at the cloud.

Whoosh...the flames descended upon Ning, who still didn't do anything to fight back.

All tribulations started weak and grew progressively more powerful; the same was true for the fire tribulation. If the Sixth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] was unable to endure the tribulation, Ning would then move to fight back. The fire tribulation, however...Ning felt confident that it wasn't capable of forcing him to defend himself.

The flames blazed about him, quickly reaching to the truefire level. One type of truefire after another appeared, including even Solar Truefire. But Ning simply continued to stand there, not caring at all.

Finally, the cloud of fire dispersed.

BOOM!

Ning suddenly seemed to transform into a burning man as a fiery light suddenly engulfed his entire body.

“Ah!” Brightmoon, watching from far away, was so terrified that her face turned ashen.

“It's fine. This is Empyrean God Fire. There's no way to block it; all you can do is endure it. Although it's far, far more powerful than Celestial Immortal Fire,” the nearby Little Qing explained, “Your father's Dao-heart is formidable. He isn't afraid of this fire.”

Indeed, Ning quickly returned to normal.

Time flowed on. Soon, the skies themselves began to gather power within them.

Empyrean God Redsnow, Silvermoon, and the other distant spectators all turned solemn. The wind tribulation and fire tribulation had been extremely easy for Ning. Given that his heartforce had reached the fourth stage, even the demonheart tribulation would most likely be quite easy. Fourth stage heartforce made him an incredible figure of the Three Realms; there was no way he would succumb to the demonheart tribulation.

The only potential threat to him was actually the thunder tribulation... which would also serve as the most important part of the tempering of his Empyrean God body!

“I wonder how powerful the first bolt of junior apprentice-brother Ji Ning’s nine nine-sets will be.”

They all watched nervously. It was absolutely guaranteed that Ji Ning would undergo the full nine nine-sets. The more powerful the first thunderbolt was, the more terrifying the final, eighty-first thunderbolt would be.

“The sky went dark!” Brightmoon suddenly called out nervously.

Everyone, Ji Ning included, raised their heads to stare at the sky.

Right.

The entire sky had turned pitch-black, as far as the naked eye could see. The seemingly infinitely large stormclouds had covered this entire region, and their overwhelming power was simply shocking to behold. As for Ning...he still just stared calmly towards the skies. Now, however, a pair of divine swords had appeared within his hands.

Chapter 5: Empyrean God Ji Ning

“What a shocking aura!”

Crazy Ji twirled his fan, narrowing his eyes. Empyrean God Redsnow just watched solemnly. All of them were extremely experienced and had seen many things; they knew very well that normally, the clouds of the thunder tribulation would consist of two dark clouds that would draw close to each other and merge together. This was true even for most nine nine-sets of thunder tribulation. Only when the thunder tribulation underwent a qualitative change would something like this happen.

The vast heavens were filled with a tribulation cloud of seemingly infinite size.

Rumble...

At the very center of the infinite tribulation cloud, countless streaks of violet light could be seen dancing about. The violet light began to swirl about and gather in number until they filled nearly the entire cloud. By now, one could see violet streaks of light stretching off as far as the naked eye could see.

Slowly, a storm whirlpool began to form in the air above Ji Ning. The whirlpool began to spin in a very sluggish, arduous manner, but as it spun, it continuously drew in and devoured the violet light around it. Even the tribulation cloud itself was being sucked into this maelstrom.

Whoooooosh. The edges of the tribulation cloud could now be seen. It continued to shrink and flow into the maelstrom, as did the endless streaks of violet light.

Within the center of the maelstrom was a region of utter chaos.

A short while later, the only thing left in the skies was this terrifying chaos maelstrom. The tribulation cloud had completely vanished. Not even any hint of its former aura of might had been left behind.

“Why do I feel so nervous right now...” Mu Northson mumbled softly.

“I’ve never seen any records regarding a thunder tribulation like this in

any of the books of Mount Innerheart.” Little Qing was worried as well.

Bolts of lightning began to materialize within the chaos maelstrom. These lightning bolts were almost completely violet, with a few streaks of white mixed into them.

Whoosh!

The violet-white thunderbolt came crashing down from the vortex in the skies. It didn't possess a savage, dominating aura; instead, it possessed a terrifying aura of imperial majesty, making viewers feel as though it was an emperor that they had to bow their heads before.

“Eh?” Ning frowned slightly. “When my Primaltwin underwent its tribulation, this sort of beautiful, violet-white thunderbolt only appeared starting from the seventy-third bolt. I didn't expect that the very first bolt my true body would encounter would be on this level.”

Ning had a feeling that this thunder tribulation of his wouldn't be so easily overcome.

BOOM!

Ning just stood there in midair, allowing the thunderbolt to crash upon his body and allowing sparks of electricity to dance across him. A divine body on the level of a Pure Yang treasure wouldn't be easily damaged.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

One thunderbolt after another came crashing downwards!

The power of the thunderbolts continued to rise. By the ninth bolt, the thunderbolts had turned completely white, a dazzling, pure, sacred white that contained an ineffable nobility and majesty to it. The white bolts crashed down upon Ning's white-robed body, but Ning simply stood there, head raised as he watched them slam down towards him.

“The thunder tribulation's not that bad.” The distant Brightmoon watched as her white-clothed father was bathed in the radiance of the white thunderbolts. A look of veneration was in her eyes as she said excitedly, “Father hasn't even done anything, but he's still able to easily

endure them.”

“Little Brightmoon, the fact that your father is easily able to resist these thunderbolts doesn’t mean that his thunder tribulation isn’t a terrifying one. Before you were born, your father’s Primaltwin underwent the Celestial Tribulation. When that happened, only the very final thunderbolt of his nine nine-sets was this dazzling white color.” The nearby Uncle White explained, “Your father has trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] and has a formidable divine body, which is why he can take it head-on.”

“The [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] is that powerful?” Brightmoon’s eyes sparkled. “I want to learn it too!”

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

The bolts of lightning continued to crash downwards.

The noble, dazzling white color began to be intermixed with streaks of gold, causing the thunderbolts to have an aura of supremacy and exaltedness. It was as though Ning was facing the Dao of the Heavens itself.

As the thunderbolts crashed down upon him, bathing him in electricity, Ning felt as though he was being washed in water. His entire divine body felt quite comfortable, and it was slowly beginning to change in very minor ways.

The thirty-sixth bolt...the forty-ninth bolt...the fifty-fourth bolt...

The power of the thunderbolts continued to rise.

“The Sixth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] truly is incredible.” Empyrean God Redsnow sighed softly. “All those years ago, when I faced the final thunderbolt of my Empyrean Tribulation, I had to go all-out in order to survive it...but it was only as powerful as this fifty-fourth thunderbolt of Ji Ning’s. But Ji Ning hasn’t even been forced to fight back; his divine body is completely capable of enduring this level of power.”

“Junior apprentice-brother Redsnow, you were born when Heaven and Earth had first been established. Back then, the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] didn’t even exist,” Crazy Ji said with a laugh. “From the looks of junior

apprentice-brother Ji Ning's thunder tribulation...there is a high chance that the Pure Yang Goldlight Thunder will appear."

"Pure Yang Goldlight Thunder?" Empyrean God Redsnow grew slightly worried. "If that's the case...I'm afraid that the Sixth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] won't be able to withstand it."

Crazy Ji lightly twirled his fan. Chuckling, he said, "Just watch."

Bathed in electricity, Ning could clearly sense the power of the thunder tribulation continuing to grow.

The seventy-second bolt. The seventy-third bolt.

The lightning bolts had turned almost completely golden, with just a little bit of white remaining within them. The power of the thunderbolts was so great that Ning's body was beginning to shudder. Tiny wounds had begun to appear across his body, but his divine power automatically and instantly healed them.

"They're actually striking me so hard that my divine body is almost unable to endure it any longer." Ning still just stared at the skies, allowing the thunderbolts to come crashing down as he watched them carefully.

The seventy-eighth bolt. The seventh-ninth bolt. The eightieth bolt.

The final bolt.

"Come out." The white-robed Ning's body momentarily blurred as he assumed the [Three Heads, Six Arms] form. Six of the Ananda World-Swords appeared within his hands.

"BREAK!" The six Ananda World-Swords in his hands, Ning charged upwards towards the skies, charging straight towards the chaos maelstrom within them. A streak of completely pure gold had appeared within the chaos maelstrom as well. This lightning bolt didn't have any other colors within it whatsoever. The pure gold thunderbolt carried a supremely Yang, supremely aggressive aura, and supremely sharp aura. Just looking at it would make one's heart shudder.

"How terrifying." Brightmoon's heart trembled.

“Pure Yang Goldlight Thunder!” Redsnow was shocked.

“Pure Yang Goldlight Thunder.” Crazy Ji finally stopped fanning himself as well.

Patriarch Subhuti and the woodcutter watched from afar as this happened. Pure Yang Goldlight Thunder...it would only appear during these tribulations. Normally, there was no way for Immortals or Fiendgods to train to a level where they could manifest this Pure Yang Goldlight Thunder. The power of this thunderbolt was too shockingly great, and it contained boundless mysteries within it.

Ning, using [Three Heads, Six Arms] and his six Ananda World-Swords, charged straight against the heavens!

The supremely Yang and supremely aggressive Pure Yang Goldlight Thunder came smashing down towards him!

CRASH!!!!

Six dazzling streaks of sword-light lit up.

Every single streak of sword-light was filled with Ning’s powerful heartforce. His fourth level heartforce had been completely poured into his swords.

BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM! The six powerful streaks of sword-light smashed head-on against the thunderbolt. The bolt of Pure Yang Goldlight Thunder was completely blasted apart with a violet explosion, but shattered bits of golden electricity still came crashing down upon Ning’s body. However, they were only enough to cause Ning’s divine body to tremble slightly. They were unable to leave behind any actual wounds.

Whooooosh. The chaos maelstrom in the skies rapidly began to shrink, condensing into a final streak of lightning.

Swish!

The streak of lightning landed upon Ning’s body, having moved so incredibly fast that there was no way to block it at all.

Crackle...pop...rumble...

Ning could sense all of his bones crackling and popping. Thanks to this profound, arcane streak of lightning, his body was quickly changing and transforming, becoming even tougher and even more powerful. At the same time, his internal organs and his muscles were rumbling as they transformed as well.

“According to the legends...if one endures the Pure Yang Goldlight Thunder, then after one becomes an Empyrean God, one will have a perfect divine body.” Ning understood what was happening.

If an Empyrean God wished to break through to become a True God, a prerequisite was that the Empyrean God’s body had to first be perfected. A perfect divine body meant that in terms of speed, divine power, or physical strength, one had to reach the utter peak of power possible for Empyrean Gods. If there was no Pure Yang Goldlight Thunder, he would have to slowly train for an extremely, extremely long period of time.

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Ning sat down in the lotus position within the desolate wilderness.

The demonheart tribulation had come.

“The demonheart tribulation is of no threat to Ji Ning.” Patriarch Subhuti smiled merrily towards his distant disciple, then nodded and said, “We can consider his Empyrean Tribulation to have been a success.” Patriarch Subhuti then vanished into thin air.

The woodcutter nodded slightly as well. In a soft voice, he said, “I wonder if this junior apprentice-brother Ji Ning of mine will be able to break through to become a True God or Daofather before the final Endwar.” And then, the woodcutter vanished as well.

As the two vanished, the only one of the spectators who seemed to vaguely sense something was Crazy Ji. Crazy Ji turned his head, scanning behind him with a frown on his face. “What did I just sense? Was that Master and eldest apprentice-brother?” In all of Mount Innerheart, the only ones who were capable of acting in such mysterious, inscrutable ways

were his master and the eldest apprentice-brother, the most formidable figure amongst all of the disciples.

.....

Ning's heartforce was far too powerful. Although the demonheart tribulation that descended upon him was extremely terrifying, Ning's heartforce was able to easily resist it. Ning only had to spend roughly a month within the demonheart world before he completely awakened from it.

"I've always known that she would be the shadow cast over my heart."

"I even tried to force myself to believe that she really was my senior apprentice-sister."

"Alas...I could still sense, no matter how hard I tried, that it was nothing more than a lie. An illusion."

Ning sat there in the lotus position. He slowly opened his eyes, filled with unshed tears. However, his tears quickly dissipated and vanished.

His heartforce had reached the fourth stage. It was far, far too powerful.

He had wanted to spend some extra time with 'Yu Wei' in the world of the demonheart tribulation, but alas...he found out, to his agony, that his heartforce was so powerful that he couldn't help but see through all of the lies. The Yu Wei of the demonheart world was fake. An illusion.

At the same time, Ning understood that if his heartforce had only been at the third level, he might have been completely unable to tell that the Yu Wei of the demonheart world was an illusion...and that he might've truly, forever become trapped within that world, never to escape again.

"Nothing more than foolish hopes and dreams..." Ning shut his eyes.

BOOM!

Heaven and Earth seemed to change in color as beautiful, auspicious clouds of light filled the skies and golden lotuses filled the ground.

Rumble...

Enormous copies of the Solar Star and Lunar Star appeared in the air above Ning. An utterly torrid flow of power from the Solar Star and Lunar Star was transmitted directly into Ning's body, as did an enormous amount of natural energy from Heaven and Earth.

Ning, seated atop a field of golden lotuses, had become the heart of this seemingly-infinite storm of energy.

Light swirled across his entire body...and within it, a golden pellet Jindan took form.

At the same time, his divine body began to ravenously devour the power of the Solar Star and the Lunar star. By the time everything came to an end and the world turned normal again, Ning's divine body was already beginning to emanate a natural aura of majesty and power, an aura that belonged exclusively to the most supreme of Empyrean Gods...because Ning's divine body had already reached the perfect level.

"Father." Brightmoon ran straight towards him.

Ning, still seated in the lotus position, laughed as he hugged his daughter.

"Father, you are too incredible!" In her father's arms, Brightmoon raised her head to look at him. Light was shining from her eyes. She would never, ever forget the sight of her father being bathed in lightning, nor would she ever forget the sight of the enormous Solar Star and Lunar Star appearing above her father's head as he sat there atop a bed of golden lotuses.

A heartbeat later, Empyrean Gods Redsnow, Primelight, Snow Scorpion, Dovesnake, Ninefangs, Sunblaze, and Darkmoon all moved in unison towards Ji Ning. Looks of utter excitement were in their eyes, and the giant yellow bear appeared as well. The eight of them looked towards Ning, faces full of joy and anticipation.

And then...they all knelt down respectfully on one knee. "Respectful greetings to you, Manorlord!"

The Starseizing Manor...was finally going to once more appear within the Three Realms!

Chapter 6: The Starseizer World

His daughter still in his arms, Ji Ning hurriedly rose to his feet. “Everyone, please rise!”

Only then did the seven Empyrean Gods and the giant yellow bear rise to their feet, their eyes still filled with excitement.

“In the future, don’t kneel before me.” Ning shook his head, his daughter still in his arms. “I am nothing more than the heir to my master, Daoist Threelives, which is why I was fortunate enough to become the Manorlord of the Starseizing Manor. In terms of cultivation, all of you have been training for far, far longer than I have. In terms of power, I am just like the rest of you, a mere Empyrean God.”

“The Manorlord is the Manorlord.” The dazzlingly beautiful white-browed woman, Snow Scorpion, revealed a smile. “The Manorlord commands the Starseizing Manor. We are your subordinates. We have to follow the rules.”

“That’s right, Manorlord.” The bald old man, Ninefangs, let out a laugh. “Long ago, countless Fiendgods would prostrate when our Godking gave an order. Ahaha...just thinking about those days makes my blood boil. Back then, I hadn’t even become an Empyrean God.”

“Manorlord, don’t...” Dovesnake was about to say something as well, but Ning swept them all with his gaze. “My rule is...you are not to kneel before me.”

Redsnow and the rest of the seven exchanged glances. They could sense Ning’s resolve, and so they no longer argued against him. They respectfully assented, “Yes.”

At his current level, Ning’s Dao-heart was incomparably pure. He liked what he liked, and he disliked what he disliked! There was no way Ning would allow the old rules of the Starseizing Manor to bind himself. Ji Ning was different from the former Godking, Daoist Threelives; Daoist Threelives liked to dominate and liked to fight for supremacy in the world, but Ning did not. He preferred to focused on increasing his personal

power.

If one was powerful enough, one would naturally be able to dominate all those in one's path.

Mother Nuwa was a good example. She had been the paragon of the Three Realms.

Ning's goal was to reach Pangu and Nuwa's level...and then to surpass them! But of course, that was assuming Pangu's level wasn't the final stage possible in cultivation.

“Junior apprentice-brother...”

“Senior apprentice-brother Ji Ning...”

The many distant spectators were all completely stunned. Amongst the many disciples of Mount Innerheart, the vast majority of them, aside from the likes of Patriarch Subhuti and Crazy Ji, did not know of the connection between Ji Ning and Daoist Threelives!

Not even Mu Northson or Autumn Leaf knew about it!

“Daoist Threelives? He was a True God who was born from the vast, infinite primordial chaos. According to the legends, the divine ability he created, the [Starseizing Hand], is no less terrifying than [Houyi's Archery].”

“So senior apprentice-brother is actually the successor to Daoist Threelives?”

All of them were completely stunned.

After Empyrean God Redsnow and the rest of the seven had intervened during the Realmwar, word had long since spread that these were the former followers of Daoist Threelives. This resulted in his name once more being discussed by the many Immortals and Fiendgods of the Three Realms. The likes of Mu Northson and Uncle White had naturally heard of the story of Daoist Threelives as well.

“Right.”

Ning swept the familiar faces of his kinsmen and his fellow disciples

with his gaze, then nodded. “Daoist Threelives is my master as well. When I was young, I was fortuitous enough to receive his legacy. From today forward...I shall also be considered a member of the Starseizing Manor. Redsnow and the rest of the seven are also Empyrean Gods of the Starseizing Manor.”

Mount Innerheart was composed of members of many different organizations. For example, it included the Flower-Fruit Mountain lineage, one of the most powerful of Diremonster lineages. Ning had now become the commander of the Starseizing Manor lineage.

“Then does that mean I’m also considered as belonging to the Starseizing Manor lineage?” Northson laughed.

“I guess you could just barely qualify as a member,” Little Qing chortled. “I’m Master’s spirit-beast; I definitely qualify as a member.”

“Junior apprentice-brother Ji Ning, you have suddenly risen to the exalted rank of Manorlord of the Starseizing Manor. In the future, I imagine that there will be many favors I will need to ask of you,” Silvermoon said with a laugh.

“Right now, my Starseizing Manor is still a bit weak. Senior apprentice-brother, why don’t you join our lineage?” Ning said with a laugh.

Subhuti had a total of twenty personal disciples.

The eldest was the woodcutter, while the second was Crazy Ji. Both of them were Daofathers.

The third disciple, Zen-Master Goldlight, had been a Golden Crow that was born from within the Solar Star. He had incredible talent and shocking levels of power, but he roamed the Three Realms and was difficult to locate.

The fourth disciple was Lord Northriver. He had originally belonged to the primordial human clan, but he was now the hegemon of a celestial river located within the Celestial Realm, the ‘Northriver’. He had established the Northriver clan there, and had more than ten Empyrean Gods and True Immortals under his command.

The fifth disciple was Silvermoon. Silvermoon had been born a Terrorbeast, and truly was a demonic figure. He had unleashed a storm of blood and murder during the Primordial Era, but then had calmed down. He had stayed in seclusion in Mount Innerheart ever since, willing to be the guardian of Mount Innerheart's 'Divinities Palace'.

The sixth disciple was the leader of the Diremonsters of Flower-Fruit Mountain, Sun Wukong. Long ago, when Mother Nuwa had repaired the damage to the Heavens, she had used five-colored rainbow stones that were created through distilling the essence of the Five Elements. One of the leftover pieces, after having absorbed spiritual energy from Heaven and Earth over the course of countless years, had then given birth to Sun Wukong. Sun Wukong was truly a born genius who had trained even more quickly than Ji Ning himself, almost instantly becoming an Empyrean God! By now, he had even broken through to become a True God, and was an extremely famous figure amongst the Diremonsters.

The first six disciples of Subhuti were all extraordinary, to say nothing of the fact that he had fourteen more!

"Join your Starseizing Manor?" Silvermoon twirled his fan, a hint of indecision on his face. "Y'know, that doesn't sound like a bad idea."

"Senior apprentice-brother Silvermoon, if you were to join us, then the two of us would each become the commander of a Three-Eyed God," Redsnow said with a laugh.

Although Redsnow was very confident in his power, he didn't dare claim that he was necessarily more powerful than Silvermoon.

"My two junior apprentice-brothers..." After pausing for a moment, Silvermoon smiled as he looked at Ning. "I wasn't joking just now. The storm has arrived, and my peaceful days are about to come to an end. I'm in no rush right now, but once I decide to rejoin the rest of the world...then I shall do so as a member of your Starseizing Manor."

Ning and Redsnow were overjoyed! Both of them had just made casual invitations, but they hadn't actually expected Silvermoon to accept.

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The space around Ji Ning and the seven Empyrean Gods turned blurry.

“We’ve already entered the Starseizer world.” Redsnow pointed downwards, the eight of them standing in midair. “The vast world beneath is us the Starseizer world, the foundation of our Starseizing Manor.”

“Right.” Ning willed it his coresense to spread out, and it rapidly expanded to cover the entire Starseizer world.

“Our Manorlord has incredibly powerful coresense; he’s actually able to encompass the entire Starseizer world with it.” The beautiful Snow Scorpion gasped in astonishment.

“Completely cover it?” Ninefangs was absolutely shocked as well. “The Manorlord has only trained for a century, but his coresense has actually reached a level like this?”

Coresense’s power came from the soul!

The more powerful one was, the more rapidly one’s soul would gain in power. For example, the Primal level was beneficial to the soul, but the Void level was even more beneficial. Upon becoming a Celestial Immortal, the Jindan would be formed and the soul would be completely merged into it, allowing it to improve at an even more shockingly fast pace. As for the Pure Yang Jindan of a Pure Yang True Immortal, its effects on the soul were even more astonishing.

No matter what though, nurturing the soul was something that required time. Ning’s true body had just become a Pure Yang True Immortal moments ago, after all! If he had been given a thousand years, his soul would naturally be nourished by his Pure Yang Jindan to an extremely powerful level. In that situation, none of them would be shocked by the power of his coresense.

But Ning had literally just overcome his tribulation, and he had trained for merely a century or so!

“Don’t forget that Manorlord’s heartforce has reached the fourth stage,” Redsnow reminded.

Ning didn’t say anything to them. In truth, he was capable of

encompassing the entire world with his heartforce alone. If he was to use his coresense through his heartforce, he would be able to encompass a much, much greater area. However, that wasn't particularly impressive; it must be understood that the maximum coresense of a Daofather was capable of encompassing the entire Three Realms. But of course, that would only be possible for a short period of time, as it was incredibly taxing to the soul.

"Eh?" Ning nodded slightly. "The Starseizer world has a total of roughly 16,000 Celestial Immortals, 1,500,000 Loose Immortals, and more than 100,000 Void-level Fiendgods...it really is comparable to the Grand Xia."

"Those Void-level Fiendgods have all existed since the Primordial Era." Redsnow shook his head. "In the countless years which have passed since then, the only one who managed to break through was Ninefangs. None of the others have made any breakthroughs. As for the sixteen thousand Celestial Immortals...not a single Pure Yang True Immortal has appeared amongst their ranks."

Ning said in surprise, "Why is that?"

"Because the world was severed from the rest of the Three Realms," Primelight said solemnly. "There's no way for them to undergo any true tempering and testing. Without enough pressure, without enough experience...it is incredibly difficult for any of them to make any breakthroughs. The Celestial Immortals of the Grand Xia are able to roam the entire Three Realms and fight against some of the experts of the three thousand major worlds and the Celestial Realm; naturally, a few will make breakthroughs every so often."

"The Starseizer world, however, has always remained completely sealed off." Primelight shook his head.

"We've been waiting this entire time for our new Manorlord to be born. If no Manorlord arises, then our Starseizer world would never reappear," Redsnow agreed.

Ning felt tremendous admiration for Redsnow and the rest of the seven.

Back then, nobody had known if Daoist Threelives was still alive or not,

and Threelives hadn't forced them or required them to remain loyal to him. Many of his subordinates had left, but the seven of them had resolutely clung to their duty to stand guard here.

"Although our Starseizer world doesn't have that many Celestial Immortals or Loose Immortals, we have more than enough to form a perfect Heaven Punisher Formation." Redsnow suddenly glanced sideways towards the empty space next to him. The giant yellow bear suddenly appeared, who stared in a pitiable manner towards Ning.

"Big bear." Ning was stunned.

A look of expectation could be seen in the giant yellow bear's eyes. "The treasures which Master stored within the Treasure Hall were meant for his various successors to use. Master didn't know how many successors there would be before an Empyrean God would emerge amongst them and become the new Manorlord of the Starseizing Manor. Ji Ning...now that you have become the Manorlord, you can go collect the three items which Master left behind for you. There is a space which only the new Manorlord can enter; not even I can enter it. For countless eons, I've been wondering what the three treasures which Master left behind are. I've been absolutely itching to find out! Hurry up and go collect them and let me take a look at them. I promise I won't tell anyone."

The giant yellow bear looked eagerly towards Ning.

"Three treasures?" Ning said in surprise, "Didn't my master, Daoist Threelives, simply leave behind a few Pure Yang treasures for me?"

"Those were all for the various successors, not the new Manorlord. Now that you have become the Manorlord, all the treasures of the manor are yours, along with the most important treasures; those three," the giant yellow bear hurriedly explained.

"I've heard of this. The Godking once spoke to me about this as well." Redsnow looked towards Ning. "The Godking had already reached the Sixth Cycle of his [Starseizing Hand]; his hand was far more powerful than any Protocosmic spirit-treasures. They had already reached the legendary Chaos treasure level! Thus, the Godking traded away the most precious

treasures he had to the other True Gods and Daofathers in order to prepare these three treasures for you. You can say that he did this to help our Starseizing Manor prepare to once more rise to prominence...”

“Manorlord, hurry up and go collect them. My foster father didn’t tell us what the treasures were either. All of us are also quite curious,” Primelight said hurriedly.

“Alright.”

Ning was also quite curious about what Daoist Threelives had left behind. He immediately looked towards the giant yellow bear. “Big bear, lead the way.”

Chapter 7: Please Help Me, Master

“Right on!” The giant yellow bear excitedly spun around, instantly causing them to teleport elsewhere in the estate.

Within the Starseizing Manor.

Ji Ning, the giant yellow bear, Redsnow, Primelight, Snow Scorpion, and the others all appeared within the main hall.

“The rest of you can wait here.” The giant yellow bear turned to look towards Redsnow and the others. “The secret treasure vault is only accessible to the new Manorlord.”

“Alright.” Redsnow nodded.

“Unlike you, you big bear, the rest of us are quite patient. Look at how eager you are!” Primelight shook his head and snickered.

The giant bear stared at him. “Are things the same for you and me? I’ve been guarding this place for countless eons now. It wasn’t so bad before, but now that I know that Ji Ning has made his breakthrough and become the new Manorlord, of course I’m going to be unable to control my curiosity. I’m not to blame.”

“Enough, big bear. Lead the way,” Ning said.

“Come with me.” The giant yellow bear led the way, and Ning followed him.

The bear and the man walked through the hallways of the underwater estate. In truth, the estate was quite vast; this was the place where Daoist Threelives and his countless Fiendgod minions had lived, after all.

“Ji Ning, you have now become an Empyrean God and a True Immortal, you can completely bind the Starseizing Manor,” the giant bear said.

“Right. Later, I’ll bind it completely.” Ning nodded. He was in no rush. The Starseizing Manor was an estate-type treasure which held the Starseizer world within it. Now that he had become an Empyrean God, all he had to do was wait for Daofather Crimsonbright to send the necessary

Immortal pills to him. He would soon be able to reach the Ninth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], at which point in time his body would be comparable to a top-grade Pure Yang treasure. Even if he encountered any danger, there would be no need for him to hide within the estate.

Even if he did need to hide...Ning had collected Protocosmic spirit-treasures during the Realmwar. The underwater estate was now much less important to him than it had been in the past. However, it still held unique importance for him; when he had been very young, it had been extremely helpful to him in his growth.

Whooosh.

They flew past a curtain of water and arrived at a blurry spatial corridor. Ning and the giant bear walked through the corridor, moving towards a place which Ning had never been before.

“Eh?” Ning saw that at the end of this spatial corridor, there was a blurry barrier of flowing light.

“This is the protective formation which Master left behind,” the giant yellow bear said, pointing at the barrier. “Long ago, Master said that only the new Manorlord would be able to open it.”

“Oh?” As Ning walked forward, he sent his coresense forward to investigate it. Although he wasn’t exactly an elite formations expert, he still knew a good amount regarding the art of formations.

“Open up.” After analyzing it for a moment, Ning suddenly reached out with his palm. The divine Starseizing Tattoo appeared within it, and he slapped his palm down against the barrier. Light flowed atop the barrier as a rune that was extremely similar to the Starseizing Tattoo appeared atop it.

Ning’s palm transformed to become three hundred meters in size as he slammed it down upon the barrier...but the only result was that the shockwave forced him back three steps.

“It didn’t open?” The giant yellow bear was puzzled.

“Not right now.” Ning stared at the light barrier, then shook his head.

“Let’s go back for now.”

“Why can’t you open it? Master said that the new Manorlord would be able to open it,” the giant yellow bear said frantically.

Ning laughed. “I discovered just now that this barrier comes from the exact type of energy as the Starseizing Tattoo. The only thing that can open it is the Starseizing Tattoo, but when I tried just now, I discovered that because my own tattoo isn’t complete enough or strong enough. I imagine that only after reaching the Fifth Cycle can one open this barrier. But of course, there’s another method; to rely on overwhelming power to force it open! Although my master Daoist Threelives was quite formidable, countless eons have passed since he set up the formation. If I rammed against the formation he left behind ten or so times, I’d probably be able to break through it, but if I did that...the treasures which Master left behind might be teleported away through some other mechanism.”

“Right. You can’t brute force it.” The giant yellow bear nodded hurriedly.

This was no joke. It was entirely possible that there was a secondary mechanism within that would teleport the treasures away into the Void of space or into some extremely dangerous regions once the formation was broken through by brute force. How hard would it be to locate the treasures once they were lost?

In fact, counter-attack formations might appear as well.

“Let’s go.” Ning turned and left. “I need to first train my [Starseizing Hand] to the Fifth Cycle.”

Ning first went to the main hall of the Starseizing Manor to meet with Redsnow, Primelight, and the rest. They were all eager to find out what relics Daoist Threelives had left behind...but alas, Ning had been unable to actually break through the formation for now. The seven of them had no choice but to return to the Starseizer world for now.

Within the Treasures Hall.

“All of the treasures of the Treasures Hall are here.” The giant yellow bear pointed towards the ceiling as he handed Ning a book. “This book

has a record of all the Immortal-ranked and Pure Yang treasures.”

Ning nodded and accepted the book.

“There’s actually a total of twenty-eight Pure Yang treasures.” Ning couldn’t help but sigh in amazement. “And that’s in addition to the Sole-Ki Nine Elements Pearls and the Ananda World-Swords. All of the Pure Yang treasures that Master left behind are fine specimens.”

Amongst the best Pure Yang treasures, there were a few that were especially powerful. All of them were set treasures, and the very best ones had their own specialties; it was hard to say which was the definitive best.

The ‘Eight Fires Qiankun World’, for example, had been forged by Elder God Zhurong, who had already fallen during the war that ended the Primordial Era. It had been forged with incomparably precious treasures into the form of eight lotus petals. When the eight lotus petals completely bloomed, they could unleash eight powerful streaks of truefire! It must be understood that the entire Three Realms only contained nine types of truefire, but this Eight Fires Qiankun World included eight of them!

In addition, Elder God Zhurong had fused some marvelous formations into this treasure of his. Once all eight types of truefire were merged together into one, they would possess utterly earth-shattering destructive power.

Pure Yang True Immortals would most likely only be able to flee in the face of this power. Only Empyrean Gods with powerful divine bodies would dare to fight it head-on. Most importantly of all...this was an large-scale area attack that was the size of a world. It could absolutely destroy everything within its range! Thus, the Eight Fires Qiankun World, despite ‘merely’ being a single top-grade Pure Yang treasure, was worth more than a hundred ‘ordinary’ top-grade Pure Yang treasures!

There was also the ‘Grand Bloodshadow Formation of the Heavens’. It was composed of a total of ninety-nine top-grade Pure Yang treasures, and once they joined together to form ninety-nine bloodshadow clones, they would have similarly astonishingly might.

“Alas, there are no sword-formations, which is what I need.” Ning shook

his head. Although there were flying swords amongst the treasures, Ning need a total of more than seven hundred Pure Yang flying swords. The vault which Daoist Threelives had left behind simply didn't include that many items.

The finest sets of top-grade Pure Yang treasures which Daoist Threelives had stored in his vault were some of the finest treasures of the Three Realms, capable of allowing any Empyrean God or True Immortal to instantly become far more powerful. Unfortunately...Ji Ning was no ordinary Empyrean God or True Immortal. He had reached the fourth stage of heartforce already. Once he mastered the Fifth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand] and the Ninth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], he was already a supreme figure amongst his peers. The amount of benefit these treasures would bring him was very limited.

He was simply too powerful already. He didn't need too much outside support.

Or, to put it a different way...

The outside support he needed had to be of a tremendously powerful level.

Ning would naturally be willing to risk his very life to acquire a Chaos treasure, but those were far too precious and rare. Not even most Daofathers or True Gods were in possession of one! One of the reasons why Daoist Threelives had been so powerful was precisely because once his [Starseizing Hand] reached the Sixth Cycle, his hands had become as powerful as Chaos treasures!

Chaos treasures...only the primordial chaos could give birth to treasures of such astonishing, heaven-shaking power.

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Ning left the Starseizing Manor to visit his master, Subhuti.

Within Subhuti's Daoist monastery.

"Master," Ning called out respectfully.

“What is it?” Subhuti looked towards Ning.

“Your disciple wishes to train in the Fifth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand], but needs some materials to do so. These materials are very hard to gather. Your disciple is willing to exchange treasures for them with you, Master,” Ji Ning said. The Xia Emperor had once wanted to come up with enough treasures for Ning to train to the Fifth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand], but...not even most True Gods or Daofathers were in possession of those treasures. Most likely, they would have to seek out friends and gather the items from many places.

But of course, Ji Ning naturally had sufficient treasures to engage in the necessary trading.

During the Realmwar alone, Ning had acquired multiple Pure Yang treasures and two Protocosmic spirit-treasures. However, those Pure Yang treasures were not part of a set. Daoist Threelives had collected multiple sets of top-grade treasures, which was exceedingly rare. The total number of treasures, however, was enough to trade for the necessary materials for him to reach the Fifth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand].

As for the likes of the Eight Fires Qiankun World or the Grand Bloodshadow Formation of the Heavens? Any single one of those sets would be enough to trade for the necessary materials.

“As your master, I have yet to give you any gifts for your breakthrough into the Empyrean God level.” Subhuti shook his head. “You can consider the materials needed to reach the Fifth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand] as a gift from me. However, although I’m able to give you the materials needed for the Fifth Cycle...I’m not able to give you the materials you will need for the Sixth Cycle.”

“Your disciple understands.” Ning nodded.

Almost all the items that could be used for him to cultivate his hands to the Chaos treasure level were only locatable within the primordial chaos, and extremely rare as well.

In the past, Daoist Threelives had been lucky enough to encounter a piece of golden starstone in the primordial chaos. After analyzing the

starstone for countless years, he came up with a way to use the starstone, along with many other materials he had located within the primordial chaos, to develop the Sixth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand]. Treasures like that golden starstone, however, were incredibly rare. Per what Daoist Threelives had said back then, Daoist Three Purities had also encountered a piece of golden starstone, and had eventually used it to create the Immortal Slaying Sword's sword-diagram.

"Tell which materials you need," Subhuti said.

"Yes." Ning began to list them out one by one.

Subhuti raised an eyebrow. Smiling, he said, "This is actually rather difficult. I'll need to go find some of my old friends to acquire them. Wait a bit." Subhuti closed his eyes and sat there quietly for a few moments. A short while later, a spatial vortex appeared next to him and an old man dressed in Daoist robes appeared within it. The old man handed Subhuti a brocade sack, then disappeared.

Ning understood that the 'old man' was actually a created incarnation of his master.

"It's all here." A brocade sack and a gourd appeared within Subhuti's hands. "This sack has the materials you need, while the gourd contains the Great Firmament Immortal pills from Daofather Crimsonbright. There are more than enough pills for you to train to the Ninth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]."

As he spoke he waved his hand, causing the brocade sack and the gourd to float towards Ji Ning.

Ning accepted the items. "Thank you, Master." His heart was filled with delight.

After training to reach the Fifth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand], he would be able to acquire the relics left behind by Daoist Threelives. And, even more importantly, his hands would become comparable to top-grade Protocosmic spirit-treasures in might! Top-grade Protocosmic treasures... they were second only to Chaos treasures. In addition, once Ning used [Three Heads, Six Arms], he would essentially have access to the

equivalent of six top-grade Protocosmic weapons.

Protocosmic spirit-treasures weren't rare, as Ning had quite a few, as did the Xia Emperor. But top-grade Protocosmic spirit-treasures...Ning hadn't even acquired a single one thus far!

"What are you planning to do next?" Subhuti said, looking at Ning.

Ning replied respectfully, "Your disciple intends to roam the Three Realms, tempering my Dao-heart in the mortal dust and meditating on my sword-arts."

If his heartforce could make yet another breakthrough to the fifth stage...

Although thus far, Houyi had been the only one capable of it, making his own chances quite low...if he really did succeed, then he would become supremely powerful even amongst True Gods and Daofathers. Ning had a feeling that the fifth stage of heartforce could only be found within the red dust of the mortal world.

This was one of the reasons why Eastbreak and many of the others who had reached the fourth stage of heartforce often spent most of their time roaming the Three Realms.

Heartforce wasn't something that could be forced. Thus, Ning would still spend most of his time tempering his sword-arts.

"Also, I'd like to ask you for some help, Master," Ning said respectfully.

"Help?" Subhuti looked at Ning.

Ning nodded. "The storm is now upon us, and the wars between us and the Seamless Gate are unceasing. I want to ask you, Master, to help me seek out opportunities to fight them. Alternately, give me targets to attack. I'll wipe some of the Seamless Gate's headquarters and lairs."

"Targets to attack?" Subhuti was surprised. "That'll make the Seamless Gate go berserk."

The Seamless Gate and the Nuwa Alliance were like two massive armies that were facing each other.

The Nuwa Alliance had its major worlds, while the Seamless Gate has major worlds of its own. Both sides would assault each other while defending against enemy assaults.

There were some extremely formidable Empyrean Gods and True Immortals in the Three Realms, but they would at most appear during a Realmwar. Outside of a Realmwar, they wouldn't dare launch an assault against a headquarters of the Seamless Gate.

"If you launch a direct assault against one of their headquarters... although I can't sense any danger at present, once you attack they might send their full force against you," Subhuti said worriedly. "This is going to be extremely risky. To launch sneak attacks without an army supporting you...it will be very, very risky. Even if you succeed, you'll only succeed once or twice. Those successes will enrage the Seamless Gate, and they will come up with ways to set traps for you. If you repeatedly attack them and ambush them, you'll probably end up being trapped and ambushed by them instead."

Ning nodded. "I understand. That's exactly what I want, for them to be enraged, for them to go berserk. The more berserk they become, the more I will attack them and the more of them I will kill."

"Do you have to do this?" Subhuti looked at Ning. He didn't understand. The more powerful one was, the more one would understand how important it was to protect one's self during a war.

Launching sneak attacks...yes, the chances of success would be very high, but without an army supporting you, if you failed, you would become easily entrapped and perhaps even lose your life. Even if you succeeded, you would become a top-priority target of the Seamless Gate!

"I have to." Ning nodded.

"You are now quite formidable, and you are capable of commanding a Heaven Punisher. The Seamless Gate will have to pay an enormous price to deal with you. Thus, they'll treat you exactly the way they do the likes of Lu Dongbin. They won't actively act against you, as you have already reached a high level of power. The reason why they wanted to kill you

earlier was because you were weak, because you hadn't grown up yet," Subhuti said.

You had to nip potential threats in the bud. Once they actually became serious threats, however...by then, the Seamless Gate wouldn't really be willing to pay the enormous price necessary to get rid of them.

"Please help me, Master," Ning said respectfully. Where were the headquarters of the Seamless Gate? Which ones were the best to assault? Which ones should be left untouched? Patriarch Subhuti would be thousands of times better than him in making these decisions.

"Can you tell me the reason?" Subhuti looked at Ning.

"I am going to rescue Yu Wei," Ning said.

"Rescue? She's not dead?" Subhuti was shocked. "She isn't dead...how do you know this?"

Ning nodded. "She's not dead. Her soul is currently suffering unspeakable torments at the hands of the Godking within his Infinity Hells. The reason I know this is because prior to this, the Godking tried to force me to join him. He told me that if I didn't join him, he would have her suffer endless torment."

Subhuti instantly understood.

He couldn't help but look carefully at this disciple of his. He could completely imagine how agonizing this choice had to be for him. And yet...despite feeling such despair, his disciple had actually been able to break through in power and reverse the course of an entire Realmwar.

"I am going to rescue her, and this is the only method available to me," Ning said. "I'm going to kill them. Kill, kill, kill them! Kill them until they are enraged. If they send one person to deal with me, I'll kill one; if they send ten, I'll kill the entire group. I'll kill them until they rage turns to fear, until their fear turns to regret, until they finally come to make peace with me! But I'll only stop my slaughter once they release her."

"I have to slaughter them until they truly regret it. Only then would they be willing to release her." Ning looked at Subhuti. "This is the only way I

can rescue her. Please help me, Master.”

Chapter 8: The Relics of Threelives

Subhuti looked at Ji Ning. He was silent for a few moments, then said slowly, “You are taking a tremendous risk. You are trying to force the Seamless Gate’s hand...but to force them to make peace with you...to make the proud, exalted Seamless Gate sue for peace...that is going to be incredibly hard. You should understand what sort of a path you have decided on.”

“Your disciple understands.” Ning didn’t hesitate at all.

This was a path filled with danger and death!

Even though Daofathers wouldn’t personally intervene, the Seamless Gate still had other methods at their disposal for dealing with Ning. For example, using human wave tactics! They could hide a Realmwar’s worth of Immortals and Fiendgods into an estate-type magic treasure and attack Ning, or produce multiple Empyrean Gods and True Immortals on Lu Dongbin’s level and have them surround Ning! Sufficiently high numbers of Immortals and Fiendgods could threaten even Daofathers, to say nothing of Ning.

Ning would be walking on a tightrope! The path forward led to success... but falling off on either side would lead to death!

“Alright,” Subhuti said softly. “If you push yourself far enough, sometimes a miracle will happen. The only thing I can do is help you locate appropriate targets amongst the headquarters of the Seamless Gate. Everything else will be up to you.”

“Thank you, Master.” Ning was overjoyed.

“You have to be as careful as possible,” Subhuti instructed. He himself had only learned just now that this disciple of his had made the choice to thrust Yu Wei into the Infinity Hells. Subhuti couldn’t help but sigh, yet remained powerless to change things.

“Go.” Subhuti nodded, then closed his eyes.

Ning bowed respectfully, then turned and left the Daoist monastery.

After leaving, Ning returned back to his own residence, then entered the Still Room of the Starseizing Manor.

He seated himself atop the netherwater jade bed, then took out the brocade sack and the gourd.

“First, the [Starseizing Hand].”

Instantly, five streaks of light flew out from the brocade sack and swirled around him in the air in a pentagon. They shone brilliantly with dazzling golden light, warm blue light, vigorous azure light, fierce red light, and ponderous yellow light. They contained such deep concentrations of Five Elements essence that one could sense them clearly, even without engaging in training.

Those crystals that were glowing with a watery blue light, for example... the tiny pile of crystals gave off a sensation akin to a vast, endless sea.

Whooooosh.

Ning shut his eyes as the surrounding Five Elements essences began to surge towards him.

Training in the [Starseizing Hand] and the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] was quite fast; both techniques were techniques that involved training the physical body to become as powerful as magic treasures. Thus, the only requirements were fully understanding how the techniques worked and having enough materials. It was the same as actually forging a treasure.

A day later.

Ning walked out from the Still Room and arrived in the main hall. He immediately saw the giant yellow bear, Redsnow, and the rest of the seven.

“Congratulations.” The giant yellow bear clasped his furry paws together and bowed. “You’ve mastered the Ninth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], and your starseizing hands are now comparable to Protocosmic spirit-treasures. Ji Ning, these two mighty divine abilities alone are enough to allow you to roam the Three Realms without fear.”

“With your arcane art having reached the Ninth Cycle, you are now

almost invulnerable. Congratulations,” Redsnow said as well.

“It would be wonderful if I could also become apprenticed to Patriarch Subhuti and learn the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art],” the child-sized Primelight said, shaking his head and sighing. “The Manorlord and elder brother Redsnow have both become apprenticed to Subhuti. Redsnow in particular...he’s absolutely ancient, but he’s shameless enough to force his way into becoming our Manorlord’s ‘junior apprentice-brother’. And he chose to start learning the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] shortly after he joined their school!”

“I want to learn it as well.” The alluring Snow Scorpion looked towards Ning.

“Which Empyrean God wouldn’t?” Ninefangs mumbled to himself, “Back when I was just a minor soldier under the command of the Godking, all I was qualified to do was to listen to him lecture. Even now, I can’t actually learn his techniques.”

Everyone else began to grumble and grouse. As for Ning and Redsnow, they just listened, not daring to say a thing.

In truth, this was something which virtually every single Empyrean God of the Three Realms felt jealous over. The [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] had long been revered as the number one divine ability in the Three Realms for those below the True Immortal level! However, training in this divine ability was simply too insanely expensive, especially for the Ninth Cycle; the price for that was far greater than the price for reaching the Fifth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand].

Even Daofathers would feel heartache upon paying such a price.

Ning and the seven Empyrean Gods had rendered major merits during the Realmwar without taking any share of the spoils, which was why Daofather Crimsonbright, a True God and Daofather who had been born from the primordial chaos, had been able to swallow the painful price necessary to provide Ning with that gourd of Immortal pills.

“Look at the sour looks on each of your faces. Enough, enough!” The giant yellow bear hurriedly urged, “Hurry up and have Ji Ning go and

break apart the seals which Master left behind. Let's go see those three treasures."

"Right! Those three treasures."

"I wonder what those three treasures are?"

"Manorlord, hurry up and go take a look."

"Come straight back and tell us right away."

The eyes of Primelight, Snow Scorpion, and the others all lit up. They no longer grumbled or spoke words of jealousy, and instead urged Ning to go take a look right away.

"I'm quite curious as well. Wait for me here. I'll come back shortly and inform you all." Ning immediately left behind the main hall.

Soon, the giant yellow bear and Ji Ning arrived at that spatial corridor, as well as the glowing formation that lay at the end of the corridor.

"Break." Ning slapped out with a palm, transforming it and making it three hundred meters in size. His palm carried a terrifying aura of power with it; it was like the heavens themselves were smashing downwards. The power of his palms was noticeably greater than it had been before. When Ning's palm slapped down against the protective formation, a layer of light flowed across its surface as a rune that looked similar to the Starseizing Tattoo appeared on it.

Ning's Starseizing Tattoo and the rune merged together.

Whoosh! The formation simply disappeared, as though having been blown away by a gust of wind. Ning immediately saw the wooden door in front of him.

He walked forward, immediately pushing it open. Creaaaaak. The door swung open.

"Big bear, let's go in together." Ning turned to look at the giant yellow bear.

"No, no. Master's orders were explicit; only the new Manorlord is allowed to enter." The giant bear shook his head. "Those treasures aren't

for me anyhow. After you come out, just tell me what they are and let me take a look at them. I'll be satisfied with that."

Ning nodded, then stepped inside the room without any further attempts at persuasion. As he entered...his surroundings changed.

"Eh?" Ning was stunned. This was a very ordinary little room. Within the room was a prayer mat, and atop the prayer mat sat a bald, one-armed man who was dressed in fur clothes. He looked towards Ning with a hooded gaze. Ning could immediately recognize this man; it was Daoist Threelives. When Ning had been taught the [Starseizing Hand] divine ability, he had personally seen Daoist Threelives' appearance.

"You have arrived." The man spoke.

Ning instantly understood that this was nothing more than part of the spell left behind by his teacher. These words had been spoken by Daoist Threelives long ago.

"For you to enter this place means that you have already mastered the Fifth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand]. I, Threelives, finally have a successor." A calm, distant look was in Daoist Threelives' eyes. "When I was alive, I wasn't able to find a good successor. For me to find one after I die...it is enough. I don't have any requests to make of you. I only ask that you treat with kindness those who have decided to continue to protect the Starseizing Estate. I suspect that Redsnow will stay behind, but I am uncertain about the rest. The heart is hard to fathom, after all. When I was alive, they were loyal to me...but after I die, it's hard to say. As for the guardians...I hope that you will treat them kindly. If there are any Pure Yang treasures within the Treasures Hall which suit them, please give them to them."

"As for you...I have prepared these three top-grade Protocosmic spirit-treasures for you. I hope that you will survive to make yet another breakthrough, becoming a True God and a Daofather. Let my [Starseizing Hand] truly become renowned throughout the Three Realms."

"I was able to develop the [Starseizing Hand] due to a series of lucky karmic encounters. Alas, although I am a True God, I was unable to

master a Heavenly Dao and become a Daofather. Otherwise, my [Starseizing Hand] would become even more powerful.” Daoist Threelives shook his head. “But of course, that’s nothing more than a bit of empty pride. As for the path you shall take in the future, that will be entirely up to you. Even if you want to dissolve the Starseizing Manor and let everyone go their separate ways, that’s fine. I only ask that you treat the guardians of the Starseizing Manor with kindness.”

“Redsnow, Eastbreak, Primelight, Dragonsong...how many of them are willing to stay behind, I wonder?”

Daoist Threelives then shook his head and chuckled. “Forget it, forget it.”

Whoosh.

His figure disappeared into thin air.

Ning was stunned for a moment...then he hurriedly knelt down and kowtowed heavily. He kowtowed in thanks for Daoist Threelives having shown him such kindness in transmitting the Dao to him. If it hadn’t been for the legacy of Daoist Threelives, Ning probably wouldn’t have been able to become as accomplished as he now was.

“Although many of the Immortals and Fiendgods under your command have left, there were still some who resolutely stood guard over the Starseizing Manor. Don’t worry about the seven of them. I will definitely treat them well,” Ning said solemnly. This was a solemn oath. No one had been around to force the seven of them to wait there patiently for so long. None of them had any idea as to how long they would have to wait, but they had been willing to do so. In truth, Ning himself felt tremendous admiration and respect for those seven Empyrean Gods.

Ning rose to his feet.

He waved his finger. Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh! The lids atop the three boxes in front of the prayer mat all opened.

Within the box on the left was a large amount of beads, each of which emanated an utterly shocking aura.

The second box in the middle contained a small, seemingly-ragged wooden boat that was the size of his palm.

The third box on the right contained a small golden pagoda.

“So you are the new Manorlord of the Starseizing Manor?” A small bald monk dressed in golden robes emerged from the surface of the small golden pagoda. “You’ve finally come. We’ve been trapped here forever. I’ve gotten sick of this place long ago.”

“What’s the rush? Take things slow.” An old man dressed in simple clothes appeared from the small wooden boat. He looked like an old farmer.

“Finally.” A slender, handsome-looking child appeared in the air above the countless beads, seated in the lotus position. His gaze, however, was the fiercest and sharpest of the three.

“Go ahead and introduce yourselves, the three of you,” Ning said with a laugh.

“Old man, you speak first,” the handsome child said.

The simple old man nodded. “This old man is the spirit of this raggedy old boat. This boat is known as the Voidboat. Long ago, when Heaven and Earth were established, a bead of pure energy was formed from the essence of Heaven and Earth. After 84,000 years, this bead gave birth to the boat. It can shatter the Void itself. It moves so fast that in terms of speed, it was ranked as one of the top five treasures of the Primordial Era.”

“The Voidboat is very fast,” the handsome child said calmly. “During the Primordial Era, there were only two Chaos treasures that were suited for high-speed movements. One was in Mother Nuwa’s hands, while the other is in Daoist Three Purities’ hands. In the entire Primordial Era, only those two treasures surpassed the Voidboat. Based on what Threelives’ said, he prepared the Voidboat for you as a life-saving treasure.”

“I am meant for use in fleeing as well.” The small bald monk standing atop the small golden pagoda laughed merrily. “This little pagoda was formed from some unique treasures of the primordial chaos. It is

extraordinarily profound and arcane, and was titled by Threelives as the 'Nine Lives Pagoda'. Once you bind this little tower to yourself, you can tap into the profound energy within the tower to create nine incarnations of yourself. These nine incarnations will all have power equal to your own. They can use fleeing divine abilities to flee at high speed, but when they do, they'll use up the energy inside of them. Once the energy is all used up, the incarnations will dissipate."

"Not even True Gods or Daofathers will be able to tell any of the nine incarnations apart from each other. However...you absolutely cannot allow these incarnations to actually fight people. Once they do, then the enemy will realize that the incarnation is not using divine power or Immortal energy and instantly realize that it isn't 'real'."

"The nine incarnations are principally meant to allow you to flee and to distract the enemy, not for you to use them in combat. Their value lies in the fact that if they don't engage in battle, there's simply no way to tell which is real and which is not. Not even Mother Nuwa was able to tell them apart." The bald little monk said confidently, "Daoist Threelives had been wondering as to whether or not to bring me into the war, but he heard from Nuwa that there would be extremely terrifying figures in this battle, and that the Nine Lives Pagoda wouldn't be of much use within it. Thus, he left it behind."

Ning was stunned. So both the Voidboat and the Nine Lives Tower were meant for fleeing?

During the war that destroyed the Primordial World, some of the major powers like Subhuti hid themselves, only occasionally intervening to rescue a few people. Threelives had known that the enemy was incredibly powerful, second only to Pangu. Even the Nine Lives Pagoda would be of limited use...but Threelives had still decided to go and face their foes head-on. He truly was a bold, valiant man.

"And you?" Ning looked towards the handsome child seated atop the beads.

The handsome child looked back at Ning. "Both of them are meant for

fleeing. I, however...am meant for killing your foes.”

“He’s the supreme killing treasure,” the old man above the Voidboat agreed.

“He’s quite savage,” the small bald monk nodded.

The handsome child swept the two with a cold glance. Both of them beamed back at him in a rather silly manner. The handsome child then looked back towards Ning. “All three of us are top-grade Protocosmic spirit-treasures, but controlling them is fairly easy. I, however...I’m not something which ordinary Empyrean Gods or True Immortals can control. I am a supreme killing treasure. If you can’t control me, I urge you to hurry up and relinquish me to Daoist Three Purities and have him give you a more appropriate treasure in exchange.”

“Can’t control?” Ning was startled briefly, then laughed. “You haven’t even told me your name.”

“Bind me first,” the handsome child said coldly. “If you can control me... then I’ll tell you my name.”

Chapter 9: The Thirty-Six Heavens

“Alright.”

Ji Ning instantly willed the pile of beads to fly into the air. They spread out like a dazzling river of stars, filling the entire room.

“3600 beads,” Ning mused softly to himself, then chuckled. “Bind.”

His Pure Yang energy spread out in 3600 streaks, covering each and one of the beads with his power. He bound them in but an instant, leaving behind his soul imprint upon them. Protocosmic spirit-treasures were the easiest of all treasures to bind; as long as the spirit of the treasure didn’t resist, then even mortals would be able to bind them by dripping a drop of blood onto them, which would create the necessary soul imprint within the spirit-treasure.

Upon binding the beads, Ning instantly could sense everything that was held within the 3600 beads. He instantly sucked in a cold breath. “This restrictive spell...”

It was so profound as to be illegible and incomprehensible. It was vast, profound, arcane, and utterly unfathomable.

“Hmph. I imagine you’ve just discovered the seals?” The handsome child said with cold arrogance, “The primordial chaos is filled with countless stars. Once a star dies, its essence will be crystallized into a crystal core. When Pangu established Heaven and Earth, some of these crystal cores entered Pangu’s World by happenstance. These 3600 crystal cores were nourished by the energy of Pangu’s newly formed world, resulting in them transforming into the stargold beads. Every single stargold bead is a Protocosmic spirit-treasure, and is capable of transforming into almost anything, including swords and sabers. These 3600 beads resonate with each other, forming a perfect whole. They definitely are the most supreme of Protocosmic spirit-treasures.”

“Eventually, Daoist Three Purities acquired me. Daoist Three Purities, after mastering Yin and Yang, began to rove the primordial chaos. Thanks to a stroke of great karmic luck, he ended up discovering a set of nine

chaos seals. He could sense that these nine chaos seals were unspeakably profound, and so he decided to erase the many previous seals that he had placed within me, replacing them with the nine chaos seals.”

“As a result, the power of these beads increased dramatically.”

“However, these chaos seals were simply too unfathomable and mysterious.” The handsome child looked towards Ning, then said proudly, “Even in the Primordial Era, there was not a single person who was capable of fully binding and controlling the nine chaos seals.”

“No one at all?” Ning was shocked.

“These are chaos seals! They appeared within the primordial chaos and contain utterly unfathomable mysteries,” the handsome child said confidently. “Back then, Daoist Three Purities had invited Mother Nuwa herself to try to bind them, but even she had been only capable of binding the eighth chaos seal. But of course, Mother Nuwa only spent three years trying; if she spent a few trillion more years, she probably would’ve been able to completely master bind them all.”

Ning was truly stunned now.

Mother Nuwa had been incredibly powerful, but it had taken even her a full three years to master the eighth chaos seal.

It made sense.

Daoist Threelives had placed the treasures in this place prior to the war that destroyed the Primordial Era. Thus, back then Mother Nuwa hadn’t mastered the Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos and hadn’t reached Pangu’s level.

“Daoist Three Purities kept me by his side for countless years, but was only able to bind the seventh chaos seal.” The handsome child said confidently, “The chaos seals were immaculately born by the primordial chaos itself. How could mere human power compare to it?”

“The Nine Chaos Seals might be formidable, but during that great war, Mother Nuwa ended up breaking through to reach Pangu’s level.” Ning chuckled, “If Mother Nuwa was to try again, I’d imagine she’d be able to

succeed this time.”

“Pangu’s level?” The handsome child was surprised.

“What? Mother Nuwa reached Pangu’s level?” The old man above the wooden ship was shocked as well.

“Simply incredible.” The small bald monk’s face was filled with veneration.

“It’d be wonderful if I ended up in Mother Nuwa’s hands! Only then could I be used to my full potential.” A look of desire was in the handsome child’s eyes.

Ning laughed and ‘berated’ him, “You brat, not even Daoist Three Purities used you, to say nothing of Mother Nuwa.”

“Daoist Three Purities has Chaos treasures.” The handsome child’s voice was filled with some degree of resentment. “Every single Chaos treasure was born from the primordial chaos. They are born with chaos seals within them that are perfectly joined together, and thus they possess tremendous power. Although I have chaos seals within me as well, they were added in later. Naturally, that makes them a bit inferior.”

The small bald monk teased, “The main issue is that you are too hard to bind and control. In the end, not a single one of the major disciples of Daoist Three Purities was willing to use you.”

“That’s because they have no vision.” The handsome child shook his head disdainfully.

Daoist Three Purities was the leader of the Daoist Path. He had many treasures, and was a master at refining pills and forging artifacts. He was thus able to infuse the nine chaos seals he found into the stargold beads, but it had still been extremely hard to do! He had many treasures but only a few disciples. He had given each of his most favored disciples, including Lu Dongbin a chance to acquire the stargold beads, but in the end they had each decided to forgo the beads and had chosen other treasures.

Ning laughed, “Perhaps after one masters all nine of the chaos seals, your power will be simply extraordinary...but even Daoist Three Purities

was only able to master seven of the seals. His disciples naturally understood that treasures that suited them would be better choices.”

“But I’m the supreme killing treasure!” The handsome child stared at Ning in an extremely prideful manner. “Do you know? Daoist Three Purities used me as the master blueprint for his creation of the sword-diagram for his Immortal Slaying Swords.”

“Oh?” Ning was surprised.

“The Immortal Slaying Swords’ sword-diagrams were modeled after my nine chaos seals. Daoist Three Purities joined four mighty Chaos swords together, then infused them with seven layers of seals of his own devising. That’s the reason why it has such extraordinary power, and why the Immortal Slaying Swords were reputed to be the number one killing treasure of the Primordial Era. But in terms of the profoundness of the seals? The seven seals which Daoist Three Purities devised simply cannot compare to the nine chaos seals inside me.” The handsome child looked at Ning. “Daoist Three Purities said himself that even though I am ‘only’ a supreme Protocosmic spirit-treasure, anyone capable of mastering and controlling all nine chaos seals would be able to unleash a level of power that was no lower than that of his Immortal Slaying Sword Formation. That’s why I’m the supreme killing treasure!”

“Honestly, he’s the only one who calls himself that.” The old man on the boat snickered.

“More like the meanest killing treasure,” the small bald monk agreed.

“Anyone capable of binding all nine seals would probably be on Pangu’s level. By then, every single casual punch or kick would be comparable to the power of the Immortal Slaying Sword Formation,” Ning laughed.

“You guys...!” The handsome child was frantic with rage.

“Enough, enough. You are pretty formidable.” Ning laughed. “Let me give those nine chaos seals a test first.”

“You have to be able to bind at least one of the chaos seals if you want to be able to control me at all. Otherwise...the only way you’ll be able to use

me is as little balls to throw at people. It'd be a complete waste of my status as the supreme killing treasure." The handsome child said arrogantly, "Very, very few Empyrean Gods or True Immortals can master even the first chaos seal. Generally speaking, it's impressive for even Daofathers to be able to master three of the chaos seals. Daoist Three Purities had to spend countless years in order to master seven of them."

Ning just sat down in the lotus position, completely focusing his heart and mind on binding the chaos seals.

Rumble...

The 3600 stargold beads levitated in the air above Ning, glowing with light as dark golden runes flowed over them, transforming as they did so. No matter how long one stared at them, the divine runes would constantly change and appear different from the ones that came before.

These were the chaos seals!

They would constantly change, never remaining constant and forever transforming. It was like the circular ratio, 'pi', of the human world, a number that stretched off into infinity with no pattern. The chaos seals were similarly without any pattern or end. The only way to master them was to master the fundamental essence that lay beneath them. When Daoist Three Purities had found the nine chaos seals, he had been stunned and shocked by them. He had spent a total of 120,000 years in the primordial chaos meditating on them. After sensing that he had gained a basic understanding of them, he had chosen to infuse the nine chaos seals into the 3600 stargold beads.

But alas...he had only been able to completely copy and infuse the nine chaos seals into the beads! As to comprehending and mastering them? He was far from it!

"Simply inconceivable. So the chaos seals are actually this arcane and profound." Ning's mind was completely focused on the seals. He felt like an ordinary mortal on Earth who was staring at the vast, seemingly infinite stars of the Milky Way. He wasn't capable of knowing what was on a single one of those stars...and yet, before him lay the entire Milky

Way...

This caused Ning to feel a sense of despair that halted him in his very tracks.

Beautiful. Simply beautiful. Simply stunning.

This was definitely the most profound, the most stunning seal which Ning had ever seen! Not even the mysteries of the Heavenly Daos could even come close to comparing to these nine chaos seals.

“Let me focus on the first chaos seal for now.”

Ning focused all of his efforts into understanding the most basic, the most simple, and most rudimentary chaos seal; the first seal. By now, Ning was applying the full force of his powerful heartforce in analyzing the chaos seals. This was extremely taxing on his heartforce and extremely exhausting. However, thanks to the fact that his heartforce had reached the fourth stage, Ning was able to force his way into completely binding and mastering the first chaos seal in one try.

The first of the nine chaos seals began to wriggle about like a tiny tadpole...then completely disappeared, having fallen under Ning's control.

Ning opened his eyes. His eyes were filled with strange divine runes which flowed through them.

“No wonder my master, Daoist Threelives, procured this treasure for me.” After mastering the first chaos seal, Ning instantly understood. “The disciples of Daoist Three Purities are most likely all extremely close to the Daofather level. I, however...I've only mastered the Grand Dao of the Sword. I haven't even mastered the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop, to say nothing of the Heavenly Dao of Water.”

Although he was extremely powerful, his power came from his heartforce and his divine abilities. As for the Dao? Ning was very, very far away from being able to comprehend the Heavenly Dao of Water. The likes of Patriarch Lu, Silvermoon, and Redsnow had long ago mastered multiple Grand Daos. They were extremely close to mastering a Heavenly Dao; in fact, some of them had reached the final bottlenecks. Upon

breaking through the final bottlenecks, they would become Daofathers! Ning, however, hadn't even mastered the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop. He was very, very far from their level.

"So the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop was this simple." Ning could clearly sense that his insights into the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop was rising at a simply monstrous rate.

After having encountered the incomparably profound and exalted chaos seals, he could sense that mastering the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop would become far simpler.

"This treasure is tremendously beneficial to me in comprehending the Dao and in improving my sword-arts. Compared to those seals...my sword-arts are simply too crude." Ning had already found the right direction for himself.

"Condense." Ning willed it, and whoosh! The 3600 stargold beads actually began to merge together. Every ten beads joined into one, resulting in a total of 360 larger goldstar beads. Ning, however, felt great pressure when he did this.

"Condense!" Light flashed in Ning's eyes. He was forced to employ his heartforce. With heartforce guiding his Immortal energy, he was able to cause the 360 goldstar beads to once more merge together to form a total of 36 goldstar beads. Every single goldstar bead emanated an utterly shocking amount of power. By now, controlling them was just as hard as controlling a perfect Heaven Punisher; he had to employ his heartforce in order to succeed.

"What?! You are able to condense me into the Thirty-Six Heavens?" The handsome child levitating next to Ning cried out in shock.

"How can that be?!"

"Just controlling those 3600 beads is incredibly difficult. Only a fraction of the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the universe are even able to bind and control them. As for controlling the supreme Thirty-Six Heavens, there are no Empyrean Gods or True Immortals who can do such a thing. This is something which only Daofathers can do!" The small bald

monk was shocked as well. He turned to look towards the handsome child. “Were you just bragging in the past and spouting hot air in front of us?”

“It is true that only Daofathers can perfectly bind the beads into forming the Thirty-Six Heavens.” The handsome child repeatedly shook his head. “Daoist Three Purities had his most formidable disciples all give it a try, but none of them were able to succeed. If they were, there’s no way they would’ve been willing to give me up.”

He stared towards Ning in disbelief.

Ning, however, was completely occupied by the sensation of unearthly might that came from the Thirty-Six Heavens.

Chapter 10: Leaving the Mountain

“What a treasure.” Ji Ning stared at the thirty-six hovering stargold beads. After the thousands of beads had condensed into thirty-six, every single bead contained utterly enormous amounts of power. In addition, every single bead contained a heavenly world within it, with each one being comparable in size to the Grand Xia! However, these Thirty-Six Heavens were only capable of persisting for a short period of time.

Only when the 3600 beads were compressed into 36 beads would they transform into the Thirty-Six Heavens. Once Ning withdrew his heartforce and his energy, the Thirty-Six Heavens would once more disperse back into a cluster of thousands of tiny stars.

“The Thirty-Six Heavens. Each one of them is comparable to a major world. Even if you just smashed people with them, they would still possess enormous power. However, controlling them is quite onerous, at least as onerous as commanding a perfect Heaven Punisher.” Ning realized that keeping these beads in the Thirty-Six Heavens form was extremely difficult and tiring. The reason why he could do it was because he had powerful heartforce and a soul heartforce technique. There really weren’t many Empyrean Gods or True Immortals who could do what he did.

“Transform.” Ning willed it, and the Thirty-Six Heavens hovering in the air instantly began to transform in shape, first transforming into thirty-six flying spears, then into thirty-six battle standards, and then into thirty-six hoops.

“Master, these stargold beads can transform into a myriad of things,” the handsome child said.

“Eh?” Ning came to a halt. Glancing at the handsome child, he said with a calm smile, “Am I hearing things? Did you just call me ‘Master’?”

The palm-sized child stood there in midair. He said solemnly, “Master, you were able to bind and control the first of the nine chaos seals. You were even able to condense the 3600 stargold beads into the Thirty-Six Heavens. I imagine that there are very few Empyrean Gods or True

Immortals in the entire Three Realms who can compare to you, Master. To be able to follow you is my good fortune.”

“Whaaaa?” The old man atop the wooden boat stared wide-eyed.

“You were so mean-looking earlier. Now, all of a sudden, you’ve become so meek?” The small bald monk mumbled to himself as well.

“Master is very formidable.” The handsome child swept them with his gaze, then said icily, “You are fortunate to be able to follow him. I will naturally follow him with complete willingness. In the future...I might have some karmic luck of my own as well.”

The handsome child then looked towards Ning, a scorching heat in his gaze. “Long ago, Daoist Three Purities had his most powerful disciples test me out, but not a single one of them was capable of immediately mastering the Thirty-Six Heavens. In fact, Daoist Three Purities once said that this was something which only True Gods and Daofathers would be able to do. But you, Master...you did it!”

This little fellow’s flattery skills were quite extraordinary.

“I have a question,” Ning said. “What is the name of this treasure?”

“The Stargold Beads of the Heavens,” the handsome child said. “When I was first born, before the nine chaos seals were fused into me, I was already capable of transforming into the Thirty-Six Heavens! Although shifting me into that form is very difficult, once one can do so, it’ll be like one can strike against foes with the combined power of thirty-six major worlds! But of course...the amount of power you’ll actually be able to control will be up to your abilities, Master.”

“The Stargold Beads of the Heavens?” Ning nodded. “Is the transformation into the Thirty-Six Heavens the ultimate form? But why is it that I have a strange feeling that it shouldn’t be?”

“Master, you’ve noticed it as well?” The handsome child was surprised.

Ning looked at him.

“Daoist Three Purities and Mother Nuwa discovered it as well,” the

handsome child said hurriedly. “The form with the 3600 beads is the first and most ordinary form. The second form has 360 beads, while the third form has the 36 beads that comprise the Thirty-Six Heavens. This should be the ultimate form, but...both Daoist Three Purities and Mother Nuwa had the feeling that there should be way to merge all 3600 beads into one. Upon doing so...they can transform into an actual star, like the Solar Star or the Lunar Star. However, neither Mother Nuwa nor Daoist Three Purities were able to come up with such a way.”

Ning now understood. To combine them all into one? It seems his senses weren't off. However, if neither Mother Nuwa nor Daoist Three Purities had been able to accomplish it...this would clearly be a very, very difficult path to tread.

As for what would happen when they all fused into one...if it would be able to transform into a star like the Solar Star or Lunar Star...that was just the conjecture of Mother Nuwa and Daoist Three Purities.

“This treasure is extremely hard to control. It's not very suitable for others, but it's perfectly suited for me. In all the Three Realms...I am the number one Empyrean God and True Immortal when it comes to ‘control’.” Ning felt quite delighted with himself. Although his divine abilities were formidable those were only of use in close combat. A straight application of heartforce in combat used it up at an astonishing rate.

Divine archers, for example, would use up all of their heartforce in just ten or so arrows.

Thus, treasures that could be used to attack at long range were very important. This was especially true because his soul heartforce technique, in and of itself, used up very little heartforce.

After binding the three Protocosmic spirit-treasures, Ning walked out of the room and returned to the main hall, where Redsnow and the others were frantic with impatience.

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“Wow.”

“Incredible.”

Ning only disclosed the existence of the Voidboat and the Stargold Beads of the Heavens. As for the Nine Lives Pagoda, he kept that a secret. The other two items he would use quite often, and so there was no need to hide them. As for the pagoda, however, the more mysterious it was the better.

“I’ve already acquired the most powerful Pure Yang treasures which Master Threelives left behind,” Ning said. “Master left word and instructed me to be kind to the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals who have stayed behind to guard the Starseizing Manor. If you need any treasures, just tell me. All of the Pure Yang treasures are listed within this book.”

Ning handed over the book which the giant yellow bear had given him. “All of you, take a look,” Ning immediately urged. These Pure Yang treasures were of limited help to him, and none of his family members such as Brightmoon, Autumn Leaf, Uncle White, or Mu Northson were Celestial Immortals. The only Celestial Immortal he was close to was his master, Diancai, but Ning had already prepared an even more suitable treasure for Immortal Diancai.

Immortal Diancai was a newly ascended Celestial Immortal, after all. If he acquired an excessively powerful treasure such as the Eight Fires Qiankun World...that would actually prove to be a calamity for him, not a blessing.

“Let me take a look.” Redsnow was the first to peruse the book.

“Me too.” Primelight craned his neck over to take a peek.

“Nice treasures.”

“The Pure Yang treasures which the Godking left behind are all quite nice.” They all praised the Godking’s treasures.

Redsnow looked towards Ning. “Ji Ning, Sunblaze and Darkmoon have been with the Godking for a long period of time, and so the Godking gave them suitable treasures long ago. Primelight was the Godking’s son, so he goes without saying. As for myself and Snow Scorpion...we were two of his

commanders, and so the Godking gifted us with appropriate treasures long ago as well.”

“These treasures aren’t particularly important to us, but I believe Dovesnake needs a treasure. So does Ninefangs; back then, he was merely a Void-level Fiendgod. He only made his breakthrough to become an Empyrean God after much time passed.”

Dovesnake and Ninefangs both hesitated...but in the end, both nodded.

Dovesnake chose the Pure Yang treasure, ‘Yin-Yang Twin Poles Disc’. This could only be considered an above-average treasure amongst the many Pure Yang treasures Ning had, but Redsnow and the others all nodded in agreement. Clearly, the Yin-Yang Twin Poles Disc was extremely well-suited to Dovesnake. The ‘best treasure’ for a person wasn’t necessarily the most powerful treasure, it was the most suitable treasure.

Back when Dovesnake had followed the Godking, he hadn’t been particularly favored. This was because Dovesnake was a venomous Godbeast that looked docile but was actually savage. Threelives didn’t really like his personality that much! He preferred those who were open and aboveboard. Even if a subordinate was vicious and crafty, he preferred it when they were obvious about it.

As for Ninefangs, he ended up choosing an extremely powerful top-grade Pure Yang treasure, the Grand Bloodshadow Formation of the Heavens.

Ninefangs’ true form was that of a bat. The Grand Bloodshadow Formation of the Heavens was indeed very well-suited to Ninefangs. However, because this set was one of the best treasures which Ning had, Ninefangs had been extremely hesitant to choose it. Only after Redsnow and the other had encouraged him had he decided upon it. This caused Ninefangs to feel tremendous gratitude to Ning, and it further solidified his loyalty to Ning. After all, although Ning had said that this was on Threelives’ orders, Threelives’ had died long ago. It was completely up to Ning as to whether or not he was willing to hand these items over.

Ning himself honestly didn't mind. There was no point in him having that many unused Pure Yang treasures by his side. If the Empyrean Gods under his command all had formidable treasures, that would increase the power of his strike force. That was a good thing.

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"Master." After having handled the above matters, Ning went by himself to meet with Patriarch Subhuti.

"Mm?" Subhuti was seated in the lotus position. He opened his eyes.

Ning said respectfully, "Your disciple is preparing to leave the mountain and to leave the Crescent world."

"Have you finished your arrangements?" Subhuti asked.

"I've finished them." Ning said respectfully, "Your disciple's Primaltwin is going to stay with Brightmoon, Uncle White, Little Qing, Bluecliff Xiaoyu, and junior apprentice-brother Northson here at the Crescent world. The Crescent world is, at present, a rare oasis of peace within the Three Realms. I don't wish for Brightmoon to be in danger, and so I'll have my Primaltwin stay with her as she roams the Crescent world, allowing her to experience more things and grow up."

Subhuti nodded. "Right. The army of Immortals that belongs to your Starseizer world...what formation do you plan on using with it? The Heaven Punisher Formation? True God Xingtian has nodded and permitted you to continue using it. I have other formations that you can use, but they are only on par with the Heaven Punisher Formation. Do you want to switch?"

"No need." Ning shook his head. "Your disciple is already quite familiar with the Heaven Punisher. There's one more thing I would ask of you, Master."

"Speak." Subhuti looked at Ning.

"Your disciple is going to act against the Seamless Gate, but first I want to deal with Youngflame Freak and Evergreen," Ning said respectfully.

“Those two? Alright. Once an opportunity arises, I’ll notify you.” Subhuti nodded. “After you leave the Crescent world, you have to be careful.”

“Alright.” Ning nodded respectfully, then asked, “Should I have Redsnow stay here?”

“No need. I’ve already taught him what needs to be taught, and he’s already learned what he needs to learn. The rest is up to him,” Subhuti said.

Ning nodded. He was going to take the entire Starseizer world with him when he left. The seven Empyrean Gods would also follow his lead; he was the Manorlord, after all.

“Then I’ll go summon Redsnow and the others. After we are all gathered, please send us away, Master. Your disciple bids you farewell,” Ning said respectfully.

“Go.” Subhuti closed his eyes, and Ning respectfully began to walk away.

“You must be careful.” Subhuti’s voice once more rang out within Ning’s mind.

“Yes.” Ning was momentarily startled, then assented as he left.

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The black-robed Ning led his daughter Brightmoon, Autumn Leaf, Uncle White, Little Qing, Mu Northson, and Bluecliff Xiaoyu down into the Crescent world, beginning their adventures through it.

“My daughter’s left the mountain.” Ning, Redsnow, and the others all stood there atop Mount Innerheart, watching from afar.

Whoosh.

A twisted spatial vortex suddenly appeared above the grasslands in front of them, leading to an unknown destination.

“Time to leave,” Ning said.

And so, Ning led his seven Empyrean Gods into the spatial vortex, leaving this garden world. What was awaiting Ning on the other side of

the spatial vortex?

Naturally, a storm of blood!

Chapter 11: The Number One Sword Immortal of the Three Realms

“The Grand Xia?”

Ji Ning and the seven Empyrean Gods appeared in midair. They immediately saw the imperial capital of the Grand Xia located directly beneath them.

“Master actually sent me to the imperial capital of the Grand Xia? Eh, might as well go pay a visit to my master, Diancai.” Ning turned and looked towards the seven nearby Empyrean Gods, then said, “I’m going to roam the Three Realms and temper myself in the red dust of the mortal world. Unless something comes up, there’s no need for you seven to always be following me. As I see it, you can go back to the Starseizer world for now. If there’s anything important, I’ll send a mental message to you.”

“That’s not acceptable”

“How can you have no subordinates by your side, Manorlord?”

Instantly, everyone began to argue against him.

“You are the new Manorlord of the Starseizing Manor. You aren’t a rogue cultivator!” Redsnow immediately argued, “If you don’t want all of us to follow you...then how about this? Let’s just have Ninefangs follow you and serve you.”

Ning was startled. He glanced towards Ninefangs.

Ninefangs was the last of the seven to break through to the Empyrean God level; when Daoist Threelives had been alive, he had merely been a Void-level Fiendgod. However, he physically looked the oldest. Upon hearing Redsnow’s words, Ninefangs hurriedly said, “Manorlord, when roaming the Three Realms, there will always be some minor, trifling matters to handle. We can’t let you be forced to personally deal with everything, can we?”

Having just acquired the Grand Bloodshadow Formation of the Heavens,

Ninefangs was quite eager to show his gratitude.

“Fine, fine.” Ning nodded.

“Then the rest of us will return to the Starseizer world.” Redsnow and the rest of the six immediately departed, returning to the Starseizer world.

As for Ning, he first paid a visit to the imperial capital of the Grand Xia to visit Immortal Diancai, the Xia Emperor, and his cousin Yuchi Xiyue. Ning had originally planned on having his master Immortal Diancai accompany him, but Immortal Diancai declined. But of course, he didn't decline the Pure Yang treasures which Ning gifted to him. He chatted with Ning for a long while, giving him some advice.

“Time to go.” Early next morning, the white-robed Ning walked out of his room, followed by the bald elder, Empyrean God Ninefangs. The two of them teleported straight out of the Grand Xia, heading towards a minor world.

The Three Realms had a trillion minor worlds. There were simply too many of them, and every so often old minor worlds would be destroyed and new minor worlds would be born. Thus, only a tiny number of these minor worlds were actually named!

The minor world which Ning and Ninefangs had headed towards, however, did have a name. It's name was 'East Phoenix'.

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“East Phoenix world.” Ning stood at the peak of a mountain, the bald elder Ninefangs by his side.

“This is one of the Twenty-Seven Worlds of Fujū.” Ning swept it with his gaze, able to see to the very end of the East Phoenix world. “It lives up to its reputation as one of the places where Daofather Fujū once lived. East Phoenix world has countless different landscapes and far more cultivators than ordinary minor worlds. It even has a Celestial Immortal standing guard over it! It seems as though the three disciples of Daofather Fujū are quite cautious.”

“The exalted number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms...he

actually perished, his soul lost forever.” Ninefangs shook his head and sighed.

Ning nodded slowly, sighing as well.

One of the reasons why Ning was voyaging across the Three Realms was in order to search for a way to allow his heartforce to break through once more. A second reason was to meditate on his sword-arts! If he couldn’t find the first, he would spend his time cultivating the second.

Naturally, Ning would pay a visit to the ‘Twenty-Seven Worlds of Daofather Fujū’!

Daofather Fujū...

He was born a human and trained as a Ki Refiner. He had become a Daofather of the Great Firmament during the Primordial Era, and became famous due to his sword. He had managed to train his swordforce all the way to the fifth level!

Swordforce was just like heartforce; it could also be divided into five levels.

If one reached the fifth stage of swordforce, one would be considered supreme even amongst True Gods and Daofathers. This Daofather Fujū became publicly acknowledged as the number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms because, back when the Primordial Era had ended and the Three Realms Era began, he had created a supreme sword-art which had stunned the Three Realms...the [Five Treasures] sword-art. By relying on this sword-art, Daofather Fujū had become the indisputed number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms.

“According to the legends, Daofather Fujū’s sword was indescribably fast,” Ning sighed. “So fast that it surpassed the limits of speed established by the Dao of the Heavens. When ordinary True Gods or Daofathers fought against him, they wouldn’t even be able to block his sword. In power, he was very close to the leaders of the Daoist Path and the Buddhist Sangha. I imagine that he is on par with my master himself. But alas, such a peerless figure ended up dying within the primordial chaos.”

“We don’t even know how he died.” Ninefangs shook his head as well. There were records of the many events which had occurred after the Primordial Era ended. Primelight, Ninefangs, Snow Scorpion, and the others had been in seclusion for far too long; it was only after they emerged and began to read these records that they began to learn of these things.

During the Primordial Era, many major powers perished, including even Elder Gods.

During the Three Realms Era, there were naturally major powers who had perished as well!

One of the affairs that had particularly shocked the Three Realms was the death of Daofather Fujū. The only information that was known was that he had died in the primordial chaos. As for how he died or who killed him? Nothing was known. Someone who was publicly acknowledged as the number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms, a figure who was comparable to Patriarch Subhuti and Old Man Yuan, and was extremely close to the Three Emperors of Mankind, Daoist Three Purities, and Lord Buddha in power...had died, just like that. Many were thoroughly stunned by this news. Subhuti and the others had searched for the reasons behind his death, but they hadn’t found anything.

After Fujū died...

The Twenty-Seven Worlds of Fujū became incredibly popular!

This was because when Daofather Fujū had trained in the sword, he would sometimes leave behind some of his sword-arts on the mountains or in underground caves when the mood struck him. These remnants of his sword-arts contained unfathomable power which not even Empyrean Gods or True Immortals would dare touch. When Daofather Fujū had been alive, his disciples would often go to these twenty-seven worlds to analyze the sword-arts he had left behind.

As for the other Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Three Realms? They generally wouldn’t have a chance to do so. But then, Daofather Fujū died. His disciples were merely Empyrean Gods and True

Immortals; they naturally wouldn't dare to keep these twenty-seven worlds for themselves.

Thus...they opened the worlds up to the public!

All Immortals or Fiendgods of the Three Realms could come here to meditate on the remnant sword-arts left behind. The only restriction was that no one was permitted to cause any damage; if anyone did, that person would become the common enemy of countless Immortals and Fiendgods! And in truth, given that the remnants contained the might of the number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms...how many would be so suicidal as to attempt to destroy them?

Each of the twenty-seven worlds had remnants of his sword-arts left behind on them. Some had more, some had less.

The most exalted world was Sword Immortal world, because it contained the complete set of the [Five Treasures] sword-art within it.

As for the other twenty-six worlds, they just contained some scattered, incomplete remnants.

Thus, after travelling through all of the worlds, the various Empyrean Gods and True Immortals would generally choose to gather upon Sword Immortal world. Very few of them would remain on the other twenty-six worlds. During normal, peaceful times, there would perhaps be more than a thousand of them on Sword Immortal world. Sometimes they would spend a million years or a hundred million years cultivating on that world! However, since the Three Realms was gripped by a great storm, most of the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals had joined the armies of their respective realms.

There were now very few of them left on Sword Immortal world, to say nothing of the other twenty-six.

"Daofather Fujū was acknowledged by all as the number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms. I naturally have to go and analyze his sword-arts," Ning said. "Ninefangs, let us first wander East Phoenix world and the rest of the twenty-six. We'll save Sword Immortal world for last."

“Yes,” Ninefangs said respectfully.

“Let’s go,” Ning said.

Whoosh! Whoosh!

Ning and Ninefangs flew through the air, moving towards a giant, towering mountain. Because East Phoenix world was merely a minor world, it had a circumference of just a hundred thousand kilometers; it was actually smaller than Swallow Mountain! It took them only a very short amount of time to fly to their destination.

“Quite a few people here.” Ning glanced downwards. There were mountain peaks below them, and at the base of the mountain peaks sat many Immortal cultivators and Diremonsters. They were in the lotus position, quietly meditating and training.

“However, even the most powerful are merely at the Loose Immortal or Earth Immortal level,” Ninefangs said.

“Normally, Sword Immortal world would have plenty of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. East Phoenix world would have a good number of Celestial Immortals...but given the current status of the Three Realms, the Celestial Immortals have all been ordered to join their respective armies. Naturally, the strongest remaining figures are at the Loose Immortal level.” Ning swept the mountains below with his gaze. There really were many cultivators seated there.

The vast majority were actually Zifu Disciples and Wanxiang Adepts. They were all seated on prayer mats which had been left behind by the Empyrean God and True Immortal disciples of Daofather Fujū. This was to provide them with organized seating for their meditations. Otherwise, if all of them just haphazardly squeezed together, how could anyone calm down and concentrate?

“Manorlord, I’ll move them away,” Ninefangs said.

“No need. Look; that little Diremonster is planning to give us a seat.” Ning chuckled as he pointed towards a skinny, horned Diremonster who sat in the very first row of seats. The Diremonster stared unblinkingly at

the mountain cliffs, but his eyes were bloodshot. Blood was beginning to leak from his mouth; clearly, he was beginning to succumb and go insane.

The sword-arts left here were simply unfathomably profound. They had been left by a Daofather! If you gave up when you couldn't understand, you would be fine, but if you tried to force your way through...you'd easily go insane.

"Go." Ning willed it, and whoosh! The Diremonster instantly disappeared into thin air, with Ning then appearing onto that prayer mat. The Immortal cultivators around him were all focused on their meditations. Although two or three of them noticed Ning appear, they didn't pay too much attention to him. Ning and Ninefangs were both keeping their auras reserved as they wandered the Three Realms. Otherwise, if they were to release their Empyrean God auras, they would've terrified all of the Immortals and Fiendgods present to the point of quivering.

Chapter 12: Meditating

“I’ll meditate here. Ninefangs, you can either meditate as well, or go find some other things to do,” Ji Ning sent mentally.

“Understood,” Ninefangs said respectfully. He then flew to a distant winehouse. He was going to stand guard in the surrounding area, ready to carry Ning’s orders whenever necessary.

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The skinny little Diremonster who had vomited blood stared around blankly. “What...why am I here.” The area around him was filled with the waters of a flowing river. This was not the meditation area.

“Wasn’t I on Mount Dashcloud? Right...I went too far just now. I almost went crazy. Some expert must’ve intervened and rescued me.” The little monster felt fear for what had almost happened. In Ning’s eyes, he was nothing more than a ‘little monster’, but in truth he was a Primal-level Diremonster. His heart had been filled with hatred, and he had deeply desired to gain insight into a profound sword-art to take revenge. However, he had been too forceful in his attempts to cultivate and so had fallen into madness.

In truth, it was very risky for anyone below the Celestial Immortal level to meditate on the sword-arts of a Daofather. The path of Immortal cultivation, however, was a path filled with many pitfalls. There were many, many stories of those who had developed powerful sword-arts after having gazed upon the sword-arts of a Daofather. It was very common for one to gain sudden insight on Mount Dashcloud, resulting in them establishing a school of their own.

Thus, there were often many weak cultivators who would come here to meditate.

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Ning sat there in the lotus position, staring at the sword-arts that had been left behind upon the mountain walls. The mountain walls were

protected by layers of formations, none of which were particularly special; they had most likely been left behind by Daofather Fujū's Empyrean God and True Immortal disciples.

The sword-intent which radiated towards him, however, truly stunned him. He felt as though it was stabbing into his very heart.

"What powerful sword-intent. The scars on the mountain wall that were created by casual blows from his sword-arts...countless years have passed, but they are still this terrifying." Ning stared at the scars carefully. These had been left behind by a supreme Sword Immortal that was on Subhuti's level!

"Eh? That's odd." Ning immediately had a strange feeling as he stared at the scars. "There seems to be a fundamental difference between these sword-arts and the other Daofather-created sword-arts I studied at Mount Innerheart."

"The style is completely different...as though they belong to two completely different schools of thought." Ning frowned. "But what exactly is different...?"

He was searching for the answer. Ning was now an Empyrean God and a True Immortal. He was a master of the sword, and was extremely talented in this regard. He could immediately sense that something was different. It was a very indistinct, blurry feeling...and Ning wasn't immediately able to pinpoint what exactly was causing it.

"I have it." Ning had a sudden thought. He waved his hand, and a stargold bead appeared within it.

Ning had already bound all of the stargold beads. As a Protocosmic spirit-treasure, it could be controlled by Ning to reveal no presence or aura whatsoever. It was like a completely ordinary item right now.

Every single one of the 3600 stargold beads had been infused with the nine chaos seals.

"The chaos seals." Ning stared at the constantly changing runes that flowed over the surface of the stargold bead. The runes were changing

ceaselessly, never repeating in any discernable pattern.

“Right. The sword-arts of Daofather Fujū remind me of the nine chaos seals. They feel very similar.” Ning immediately realized what the difference was.

“The sword-arts created by Daofathers are generally bound by the mysteries of the Dao of the Heavens.”

“But Daofather Fujū’s sword-arts, as well as these nine chaos seals...they seem to have surpassed the Dao of the Heavens,” Ning mused to himself. “The nine chaos seals were discovered by Daoist Three Purities when he roamed the primordial chaos. It makes sense for them to have surpassed the Heavenly Daos, as they sprung forth from the primordial chaos. But Daofather Fujū’s sword-arts have surpassed the Heavenly Daos as well?”

The Dao of the Heavens was the Heavenly Daos of the Three Realms! They were the laws that governed the functioning of the Three Realms. Outside the Three Realms...the Heavenly Daos were without effect.

For example, in the primordial chaos, only the Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos would function. The other nine Heavenly Daos were useless!

“According to the stories, Daofather Fujū’s sword was shockingly fast, surpassing the limits of the Dao of the Heavens,” Ning mused. “Perhaps this is the reason why Daofather Fujū’s sword-arts were so terrifying.”

“I need to carefully meditate on this.”

Upon noting the similarities between the nine chaos seals and Daofather Fujū’s sword-arts, Ning immediately began to meditate.

Every so often, he would switch over to meditating on the nine chaos seals. Whenever he reached a roadblock, he would then switch to meditating on his sword-arts. He would compare and contrast the two.

Unexpectedly, Ning began to discover that the previous bottlenecks he had encountered when training in the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop and the Grand Dao of Qiankun were actually easy to break through. Clearly, the insights he had gained into the nine chaos seals and Daofather Fujū’s

sword-arts were of tremendous benefit towards him in training in other Grand Daos.

Time slowly passed.

Ninefangs had once more come to the distant winehouse to drink wine. The winekeeper had long ago grown accustomed to this bald old man, because he had often come here to drink during the past month...and always chose to drink the extremely venomous 'Five Immortals wine'. Another name for this wine was the 'Five Venoms wine', because it was created through matching and mixing nine different venoms together. It was truly toxic, but it was also incomparably delicious. A Zifu Disciple would die upon having a single sip; one had to at least be a Primal Daoist in order to be able to savor this wine without perishing.

"Here is some of our finest Five Immortals wine. Please enjoy, honored guest." The winekeeper personally delivered the wine and two appetizers to Ninefangs, who leisurely poured himself a cup.

Gurgle. He raised his head and drank the wine. A twin sensation of fire and ice simultaneously flooded his entire body, causing him to feel extremely comfortable. Ninefangs laughed and nodded.

"Eh?" Ninefangs suddenly had a strange feeling. He immediately turned his head to look towards the distant Mount Dashcloud. He gazed towards the white-robed youth that was seated amongst many other figures at the base of Mount Dashcloud.

"Grand Dao?" Ninefangs was surprised. He then hurriedly sent mentally, "Congratulations, Manorlord, for having mastered the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop."

"Aren't you the sensitive one? I was just testing things out, and you immediately sensed it," Ning sent back.

Ning was in an excellent mood. He had always had a high degree of affinity towards the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop. This past month of analyzing the nine chaos seals and the Daofather's sword-arts had been extremely taxing, and his progress had been rather limited...but he actually ended up breaking through all bottlenecks and completely

comprehending the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop.

Now, he had mastered two complete Grand Daos. The Grand Dao of the Sword and the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop.

“The sword-arts here on Mount Dashcloud were left behind by casual strikes from Daofather Fujū; they aren’t that profound. The next month or two here won’t be of much help to me.” Ning didn’t hold too many hopes towards the rest of the twenty-six worlds either; the most important world was the final one, Sword Immortal world. Still, Ning was going to be very cautious and deliberate in his cultivation. He would first take a look at all of the twenty-six worlds; perhaps they might be of help to him in meditating on the complete [Five Treasures] sword-art.

The second month after Ning’s arrival at East Phoenix world.

The Golden Crow hung high in the sky.

A large ship came sailing in through the heavens. There were many soldiers atop the deck of the ship, as well as many beautiful women who were surrounding a youth that was drinking wine merrily. He’d give a pinch here and a caress there, filling the ship with shrieks and giggles.

“Your Highness, Mount Dashcloud is right up ahead,” a pale-faced, beardless man said respectfully in a low voice.

“We arrived?” The beautifully dressed youth rose to his feet. The beautiful woman in his arms followed his gaze as he stared at the distant Mount Dashcloud.

“My beauties, be good and have a nice rest. I’m going to go meditate on sword-arts for a while,” the youth chortled. The beautiful women all said a few flattering words, causing the youth to feel absolutely tickled. Still...this youth was qualified to act this arrogantly. He was the third prince of the East Phoenix Dynasty of this planet, and the most talented of all the princes. His status was quite special.

“Let’s go.”

Soon, the prince led his pale-faced attendant and a host of guards to the base of Mount Dashcloud. The weakest of his guards were at the

Wanxiang Adept level, with the two commanders being Primal Daoists. As for the prince, he himself was a Primal Daoist as well.

“So many people? So many monsters as well.” The prince frowned. “According to what Master told me, the Three Realms is in the midst of a storm...which has resulted in our minor world becoming more peaceful than ever before. Still, there are now almost no Celestial Immortals who come to our world. The most powerful cultivators here are merely on the Loose Immortal or Earth Immortal level. Longxiu, hurry up and shoo away one of the people at the front.”

“Your Highness, you must not be rash. Although the strongest figures at Mount Dashcloud are merely Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals, some might have powerful backgrounds,” the pale-faced attendant hurriedly cautioned. “In addition, you yourself are merely a Primal Daoist, your Highness, and your two guards are merely Primal Daoists as well. Don’t anger those Loose Immortals or Earth Immortals. You might end up suffering because of it.”

The prince nodded slowly. “Fair enough.” Although he didn’t really actually care about those Loose Immortals or Earth Immortals...right now, at least, he wouldn’t be able to beat them in a fight.

“Then pick one of the weak ones.” The prince swept the people present with his gaze. “There should be some weaklings amongst the twenty-seven prayer mats in front, right?”

“Nobody who can sit in the front would be truly weak. Let me take a look.” The attendant hurriedly took a good look. “Twenty-one of the prayer mats in the front are occupied by Loose Immortals or Earth Immortals; they give me a sense of tremendous pressure. The other six give me much less pressure; they should merely be at the Primal Daoist level. Your Highness, which of the six do you think I should pick?”

“Six?”

The prince took a careful look. “Four are monsters. Monsters who have reached the Primal level are generally much more powerful than humans of the same level. That leaves two...that white-robed youth, and that grim-

looking man. The grim-looking man has a terrifying, baleful look in his eyes; I imagine his sword-arts must be quite formidable. That white-robed youth looks fairly unremarkable, though. I imagine he's just an ordinary Primal Daoist."

There were differences in power amongst Primal Daoists. Some were monsters who could challenge Void-level experts. The baleful aura around the grim-looking man was definitely proof that he was no ordinary Primal Daoist.

"Let's go with that white-robed kid," the prince said. "Hurry up and shoo him away."

Chapter 13: Sword School

“Your humble servant will go right now.” The attendant chortled, then walked forward.

Mount Dashcloud was extremely large, and there were many regions from which one could view all of the remnant sword-scars left behind. The first row only had twenty-seven seats, but there was a distance of more than thirty meters between each seat. This way, everyone could train calmly.

The attendant walked straight towards Ning. “Fellow Dao-” the attendant began to say in a shrill voice, reaching out to pat Ning on the shoulders.

When training, Ning had his heartforce spread out to cover this entire minor world. He was completely focused on his meditations and on the sword-scars left behind by Daofather Fujū. He was mentally deducing and inferring one type of sword-art after another! He had already visualized thousands of different types, more than ten of which were more powerful than the [Three-Foot Sword].

Every so often, he would gain an insight from the visualized sword-arts. This would allow Ning to walk farther and farther along the path of swordforce.

At this moment, Ning was completely focusing on deducing yet another powerful sword-art.

Pat!

Someone patted him on the shoulder.

Ning was instantly startled awake...and all of the effort he had put into analyzing this sword-art went completely to waste.

“My heartforce has covered this entire minor world. If any Empyrean God or True Immortal arrives, I should have found out long ago. Who the hell just disturbed me?” Ning was rather displeased. One of the greatest taboos was disturbing others when they were meditating. Ning

immediately turned his head to look towards the pale-faced attendant.

Ning could immediately tell that this person was merely a Primal Daoist.

“Fellow Daoist,” the attendant said, pointing at the prayer mat beneath Ning. “My prince wishes to meditate on sword-arts and needs a spot. He’s taken a fancy to your spot.”

Ning frowned, then looked backwards. He saw the beautifully dressed youth ensconced by many guards. The youth gave Ning a sideways glance, seemingly quite disdainful.

“You should know what to do.” A look of arrogance was in the attendant’s eyes. As he saw it, once this white-robed youth saw that there were three Primal Daoists accompanying the prince, he should be able to guess that the prince had an extraordinary background. Immortal cultivators generally understood the principle of courting fortune and avoiding misfortune.

“Don’t bother me when I’m meditating on the Dao.” Ning gave the attendant a cold glance, then shut his eyes and continued to meditate.

“You...” The attendant pointed at Ning, rendered momentarily speechless.

“Fellow Daoist, don’t make trouble for yourself!” He barked.

Ning completely ignored him. Given his power and his status, these little fellows were as weak as ants in the face of his might. Ning wouldn’t care too much if a few ants bellowed at him; he simply couldn’t be bothered to. In addition, this was Mount Dashcloud, a place for meditating on the sword-arts of a Daofather. Generally, very few would dare to actually attack someone here.

Ning believed that this person would just yell at him a bit, then leave helplessly.

“Your Highness.” The attendant ran back to the prince’s side.

“What’s going on?” The prince was rather irritated.

“That white-robed kid is like a stone. He’s quite tough. He completely

ignored me,” the attendant said helplessly.

“He’s courting death.” The prince’s face sank. “Attack. Kick him out of here.”

“No!” The attendant said hurriedly, “This is Mount Dashcloud, a place for meditating on the Daofather’s sword-arts. Any disturbances will interfere with the meditations of countless Immortal cultivators and Diremonsters. All of them will be furious with us. It’s one thing for us to irritate one of them, but we can’t irritate all of them!”

“We’re not going to kill him, we’re just going to kick him out.” The prince said with a frown, “Those who are truly focused on their meditations won’t be startled awake by some fights in the outside world. The ones that will wake up are the ones who aren’t in a true meditative state yet. Also, set up a small formation around him when you attack. That way, you won’t disturb the people around him, right?”

“The three of you, go!” The prince gave the orders.

The attendant and the two commanders shared a glance, then acknowledged the order. “Yes.”

The three of them immediately walked towards Ning.

Rumble...

A crystalline globe of fire appeared before the attendant’s chest. Instantly, a barrier of flames appeared around them, surrounding Ning.

“Fellow Daoist!” The attendant barked loudly, his voice exploding by Ning’s ears like thunder.

Ning opened his eyes. He gave the three a look.

“Hurry up and leave. Give up your seat. Otherwise...don’t blame us for showing no mercy,” the attendant barked. The two nearby commanders became filled with auras of power as well. The Immortal cultivators and Diremonsters who were nearby all halted their meditations, focusing their attention on the area around Ning with curiosity.

“Amusing.”

“It’s quite rare for people to fight at Mount Dashcloud.”

“These three are a bit too brash. If the fellow wants to give up the seat, that’s one thing, but they actually intend to force him from it? Even if they really want to give him a drubbing, they should wait until he leaves Mount Dashcloud. Why rush?” The surrounding Immortal cultivators and Diremonsters all chatted amongst themselves.

It was very common for Immortal cultivators to get into fights over minor matters, but it was rare for something like this to happen at Mount Dashcloud.

Unwilling to give up your seat? Fine. Once you leave Mount Dashcloud, don’t blame me for showing no mercy!

In the face of a threat like this, most weaker cultivators would obediently give up their seats.

“Hurry up and leave.”

“F*ck off!”

The two commanders barked out as well. They both had extraordinary backgrounds; they wouldn’t care about an ordinary Primal Daoist.

“Insolence.” A cold light flashed through Ning’s eyes.

Rumble...an invisible wave surged out, striking against the bodies of the three Primal Daoists. The attendant and the two guard commanders were just about to attack, but they suddenly sensed a wave of unearthly power crash over them. They were knocked backwards, and the commander who had told Ning to ‘f*ck off’ began to scream in agony as soon as he landed on the ground.

“AHH! AHHHHH! M-m-my Zifu...my Zifu...” The commander’s voice was filled with agony and terror.

The other, chubbier commander fell on the ground alongside the attendant. The two of them clambered to their feet, staring at their comrade.

“H-his Zifu was destroyed.”

“Destroyed.”

Both of them were filled with utter terror. The three of them had been knocked flying in a single clash, with one of them having his Zifu destroyed...although they all had extraordinary backgrounds, this was exactly why they had been unwilling to offend any of the Earth Immortals or Loose Immortals. Although they had extraordinary backgrounds, it would take time for reinforcements to arrive. If they were crippled in the interim, that would be a miserable outcome, and so they had sought out the white-robed kid, who had appeared to be the easiest to bully.

“We just rammed into a steel plate,” the chubbier commander muttered. “A steel plate with nails.”

“Bullshit!” The prince roared. The chubbier commander instantly no longer dared to say a word. In secret, however, he celebrated the fact that it was his comrade who was the one to speak rudely, as was usually the case. This time, his comrade had really suffered for it.

“Your Highness,” the attendant said hurriedly. “This person is very powerful.”

“How dare you cripple my man?” The prince had a terrifying look in his eyes as he stared daggers at the distant Ning.

The worst part of the situation was that more than half of the Immortal cultivators and Diremonsters seated below Mount Dashcloud were watching this event with curiosity. They weren’t like Ning, after all, who could easily go into a months-long meditative state. They were far weaker than him, and the Daofather’s sword-arts were far too profound. They had to stop extremely frequently, after just meditating on the sword-arts for a short period of time.

For so many cultivators to stare at him...the prince felt even more embarrassed and angry, and he shifted all of it towards Ning.

“Fellow Daoist.” The prince strode forward, his attendant and the chubbier commander hurriedly following behind him.

The prince’s voice was clear, but it carried anger in it. “Your actions are

quite vicious.”

Ning just shut his eyes again, completely ignoring him. The prince didn't dare to actually act against Ning himself; he had seen Ning attack earlier. The prince was a mere early-stage Primal Daoist; how could he be a match for Ning?

“My five junior apprentice-brothers!” The prince called out loudly.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Instantly, five figures descended from the top of Mount Dashcloud. Each of them had powerful auras. They were all at the Loose Immortal level.

“Five Loose Immortals.”

“The five Loose Immortals who stand guard over Mount Dashcloud for the Sword School.”

“This youth actually addresses the five of them as ‘junior apprentice-brother’? Can it be that he is also a member of the Sword School? However...judging from his age, I would've thought those five Loose Immortals should be much older than him.”

“Do you really need to ask? If he dares to address the five of them as ‘junior apprentice-brother’, then he must be a true, formal disciple of the Sword School.”

“I recognize him. He's the third prince of the East Phoenix Dynasty. He has been accepted by Celestial Immortal Triscorpion as his disciple.”

“So that's the case. Seems like the white-robed man is doomed. He's offended a formal disciple of the Sword School...”

“The white-robed man really doesn't know his limits. He should know that his opponents must have powerful backgrounds, for them to dare act in such a brash manner here at Mount Dashcloud. He should've been more cautious. Look at him now. He's pissed off a major foe.”

Instantly, everyone began to discuss this matter.

The five Loose Immortals all landed, the cultivators and monsters around them making way before them. None of them dared to offend the

Sword School. The five Loose Immortals all bowed courteously towards the prince.

“Senior apprentice-brother Eastluck.”

“Greetings, senior apprentice-brother Eastluck.”

These five Loose Immortals had all been alive for more than a hundred thousand years, but they all spoke out with great courtesy. They were disciples of the Sword School, but they were merely outer disciples, not core disciples, which is why they had been sent here to maintain order. Their task was to ensure that the beautiful surroundings of Mount Dashcloud were not damaged...or, to put it another way, they were gate guards. The prince before them, however, was a true disciple!

“So he really is a disciple of the Sword School.”

“A formal disciple.”

“Look at that gold medallion.”

“I heard that the Sword School is actually a very powerful school of the Three Realms. The founder was Daofather Fujū himself!”

Instantly, yet another storm of discussion arose. The Sword School had been founded by Daofather Fujū, and in the past its status had been equivalent to that of Mount Innerheart! However, Daofather Fujū had died. When trees fall, the monkeys that lived in it would scatter. In addition, Daofather Fujū was fairly mediocre in teaching disciples; he hadn't been able to produce a single Daofather. Thus, only three Empyrean Gods and True Immortals continued to remain within the Sword School. The current Sword School wasn't even as strong as the Starseizing Manor.

But despite that, it was still a school with three Empyrean Gods and True Immortals, and with many friends spread throughout the Three Realms. Thus, it could be considered one of the top-tier schools of the Three Realms. A formal disciple had a status that was far higher than the status of an ordinary Void-level Earth Immortal.

“This man actually dared to be disrespectful to our Sword School.”

“Seize him.”

“Seize him!”

The five Loose Immortals flew towards Ning like streaks of light.

Ning opened his eyes again. He gave them a glance.

Boom!

His gaze struck against their bodies as though it had taken solid form. The five of them once more transformed into streaks of light, but this time they flew backwards...and they flew so far away that they could no longer be seen with the naked eye.

Ning turned to look towards the prince.

“No...” The prince was so terrified that he hurriedly stumbled backwards. In his terror, he fell backwards and tumbled to the ground in a sitting position. This was too terrifying. He hadn’t even seen what technique this man had used! It seemed as though the man had merely used his gaze to send those five Loose Immortals flying. The guards behind him were utterly terrified as well. None of them even dared to breathe.

Whoosh. A streak of light flashed, and a bald old man appeared next to Ning. He hurriedly said respectfully, “Manorlord, your subordinate came late.”

Ning laughed calmly. “A minor matter.”

In truth, Ninefangs was utterly enraged right now. He had been taking a sweet nap just now, right next to the winehouse. As he was an Emphyrean God, his senses were naturally still spread out to cover the surrounding area. If any slightly powerful figures such as Celestial Immortals came over, he would’ve immediately noticed. But the prince and the others were mere Primal Daoists; Ninefangs simply didn’t pay them any attention at all. It wasn’t until Ning had released his power with that look that Ninefangs had been shocked awake...only to discover that someone had actually come to make trouble for his Manorlord.

“You dare to offend my Manorlord? Are you looking to die?” Ninefangs

glared furiously at the prince.

Still seated on the ground, by now the prince understood that this white-robed youth had to have a truly extraordinary background as well.

“I’m a disciple of the Sword School.” The prince hurriedly pulled out a golden insignia, clutching it as if it was his last hope. “I’m a formal disciple of the Sword School. My master is a Celestial Immortal Patriarch. Master is standing guard here at East Phoenix world! My grand-master is Patriarch Daoless!”

“Ninefangs, we’re here to analyze Daofather Fujū’s sword-arts, after all; let’s be courteous about this,” Ning said with a laugh.

The prince instantly felt relieved. He laughed coldly to himself; it seemed as though the man was still afraid of the Sword School. However, on the surface he still didn’t dare to act too arrogantly. No matter how powerful the Sword School was, it wouldn’t be able to rescue him immediately.

“You’ve offended my Manorlord. You-” Ninefangs started to say, but Ning interrupted him. “Don’t even bother. Right...the kid said his master is the Celestial Immortal that is protecting the East Phoenix world. Bring him over here,” Ning said.

“Yes.” Ninefangs nodded, then reached out with his right hand.

Whooooooooosh.

His right hand instantly pierced through the heavens as he sent it traveling more than ten thousand kilometers as he made a grabbing motion towards the Celestial Immortal Patriarch who was within the imperial palace of the East Phoenix Dynasty.

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Within the imperial palace. Celestial Immortal Triscorpion was enjoying life right now, drinking some wine as he watched beautiful women dancing in front of him. He was born a monster, but he had entered the Sword School and eventually been assigned by his own master to stand guard over East Phoenix world. The main task he had was to protect Mount Dashcloud.

“What a wonderful life. I really am blessed, for Master to have sent me here. My other fellow disciples are preparing to fight against the Seamless Gate.” Celestial Immortal Triscorpion felt quite delighted with himself. It was his great fortune to be assigned this task. “And my luck really isn’t half-bad. After I came to this East Phoenix world, I actually found a promising young talent. Eastluck’s comprehension abilities really are quite high.”

“I don’t need to take part in the war, and I even found a good disciple. Excellent, excellent.” Celestial Immortal Triscorpion beamed merrily as he stared at the beautiful women before him.

BOOM!

Celestial Immortal Triscorpion turned his head, only to see a massive, pitch-black hand smash through his rooftop and grab him.

“AHHH!!” Triscorpion only had enough time to let out a scream before he was grabbed and pulled away.

The dancing beauties stared blankly at the empty throne, then stared at the massive, gaping hole in the palace ceiling. They could still visualize that massive hand of black light.

“The Patriarch’s been seized.”

“The Patriarch’s been captured.”

All sorts of terrified cries rang out.

“But...”

“Oh my...”

“This is just...”

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All of the Immortal cultivators and Diremonsters at Mount Dashcloud stared blankly, heads raised, at the massive arm that stretched far off into the horizons. How could an arm stretch that long?! What they didn’t know was that Ninefangs’ true form was that of a bat. If he was to transform back into his true form, it would be more than ten thousand kilometers

long. The same was true of Snow Scorpion as well.

If he wanted to, he could stretch his arm out to a length of a hundred thousand kilometers. And if he was to reach the True God or Daofather level...well, Daoist Threelives was capable of smashing a major world with his palms.

Whoosh!

The impossibly long arm was retracted. The bald old man had seized an Immortal by the collar with his right hand, and was holding him as easily as he would a chicken.

“Hey kid. This your master?” Ninefangs pointed at the captured Triscorpion.

Chapter 14: One Year

“M-mas...I...I...” Prince Eastluck’s eyes bulged out as he began to stammer.

“Eastluck?” The captured Celestial Immortal Triscorpion instantly understood when he saw the prince. A look of stunned rage appeared in his eyes, then he hurriedly said, “Senior, senior, this junior is only responsible for protecting the East Phoenix world. I did not intend to offend the two of you at all. My master is True Immortal Daoless. Please spare me, seniors.”

“Manorlord.” Ninefangs looked towards Ji Ning.

“Release him.” Ning nodded.

Only then was Triscorpion allowed to land on the ground. He hurriedly rushed two steps forward, then delivered a vicious slap against Prince Eastluck’s face as he roared furiously, “Do you think Mount Dashcloud is a place for you to cause trouble? Do you think these two seniors are people you can afford to offend?”

He slapped the prince two more times, then hurriedly turned and smiled ingratiatingly towards Ning and Ninefangs. “Seniors, when you grabbed me just now, I was so terrified that I shattered a message talisman. I’m afraid that my master is going to arrive soon.” He had thought that he was in mortal danger, but now it seemed as though these two weren’t planning to act viciously towards him.

“Your master?” Ning said.

“This junior’s master is True Immortal Daoless,” Triscorpion said hurriedly.

Ning nodded slowly. “I’ve heard of True Immortal Daoless’s great fame, but I’ve never met him. It seems I’ll have a chance to meet him today.”

Whoosh!

A figure suddenly appeared in the distance...and with it came a loud, clear laugh. “This must be the one who slew Immortals and Fiendgods

with his sword as he invincibly dominated the Realmwar...fellow Daoist Darknorth, yes? How can this junior be worthy of you personally dealing with him, fellow Daoist Darknorth? You are giving him far too much face.” This laughter echoed throughout the wild mountains.

“Invincibly dominated the Realmwar?” Both Triscorpion and Eastluck were rather dazed. As for the other cultivators, they were simply puzzled, because they had no idea what a ‘Realmwar’ even was.

Ning glanced towards the newcomer. This was a sloppy-looking youth with a big beard who was flying towards him atop a cloud. His beard was extremely long, but his face looked very young; it made for an odd contrast.

“Everyone says that True Immortal Daoless is uninhibited and unconventional, but in possession of an absolutely merciless tongue. Today, I’ve seen it for myself. I admit that I am at fault; I gave a minor punishment to your disciple,” Ning said with a calm laugh. He had heard long ago that True Immortal Daoless was a man who said whatever he thought, and that sometimes his words would offend others. But in turn, his straightforward, genuine nature made it so that he made some truly good friends. He was a rather famous figure of the Three Realms.

“Hey, hey, hey, that’s not what I meant!” True Immortal Daoless flew over, his sleeves fluttering. “For a kid like this to be so brazen and foolish as to offend you? Of course you can kill him if you want! That’s completely up to you. What I’m saying is, there’s no need for you to dirty your hands. Just say the word and I’ll do it for you. Just consider it as me keeping my school clean.”

Ning was speechless.

True Immortal Daoless reputedly was uninhibited and sloppy, said what he felt, and was absolutely shameless. It seemed all the stories about him were true. There really weren’t many Empyrean Gods or True Immortals who would say such things in front of their own disciples.

“Doomed. I’m doomed.”

Prince Eastluck just sat there, completely dazed.

“Invincibly dominated the Realmwar? Is he referring to the ‘Realmwars’ which Master told me about, the ones where countless millions of Immortals will gather together in a titanic clash? The Realmwars which large numbers of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals are dying in? This... this white-robed...he...he was able to invincibly dominate a Realmwar?” Eastluck was truly dazed now. He couldn’t even comprehend what he had done.

“Even Patriarch Daoless is so humble before him. Clearly, he’s far more powerful than Patriarch Daoless...and his subordinate...his subordinate was able to stretch his arm out for thousands of kilometers to capture a Celestial Immortal...who is this person?! Why did I have to run into him? Why am I so damned unlucky?”

Prince Eastluck was filled with terror and regret. But alas...if you often walk by the riverside, how can you avoid getting your shoes wet? He had grown accustomed to acting arrogantly, thanks to his status...and today, he really had rammed into a steel plate. No; a plate of divine chaos-steel!

“Finished. I’m finished. I’m dead for sure. Dead for sure.” Prince Eastluck had gotten used to seeing heads rolling within the imperial palace upon an important figure being angered. This person before him had a status that was far, far beyond his own. It would be simplicity itself for the white-robed youth to crush him to death.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Suddenly, Ji Ning, Ninefangs, and True Immortal Daoless all soared into the skies, departing from East Phoenix world.

Only now did Prince Eastluck regain his senses.

“They...they left?” Eastluck blinked. “I...didn’t die?”

“Master!” Prince Eastluck hurriedly looked towards the nearby Celestial Immortal Triscorpion.

Triscorpion glared daggers at him. “Hmph. If we did as my master Daoless suggested, I would wipe you out right now.”

“Wipe me out?” Prince Eastluck was horrified.

“Fortunately, senior Darknorth interceded on your behalf. He said that you didn’t have any intentions to kill him. That’s the only reason why you’ve survived this,” Triscorpion snapped. “But although you shall be spared the death penalty, that doesn’t mean you’ll go unpunished.”

“It’s true that I didn’t intend to kill him,” Prince Eastluck said hurriedly. “I just wanted to shoo him away. After he crippled my subordinate, I was furious with him and planned to lock him up and punish him.” Prince Eastluck wasn’t an evil person by nature. However, because he had been born into the imperial clan and because of his talent in cultivation, he had been flattered by others all his life and became accustomed to acting in an arrogant, high-handed manner. And after he became a disciple of the Sword School, his status had only risen even further.

Simply put, he had gotten used to bullying others, which is why he had been so stunned and furious when Ning had crippled his subordinate. How long had it been since someone else had bullied him?

After Ning had revealed his true power, Eastluck had instantly been so terrified that he couldn’t stop sweating. Fortunately for him, he hadn’t planned to kill Ning. If he had, how could Ning possibly not have noticed? If that was the case, Ning wouldn’t have interceded on his behalf at all.

“My master, Daoless, had been planning on expelling you from the school, but senior Darknorth instead suggested that you be sent to the mortal world instead. You are to serve as a junior servant in a winehouse for three hundred years. During these three hundred years, you are not to fight back when struck, nor are you to argue when cursed at.” Triscorpion laughed coldly. “If you disobey, then you will immediately be expelled from the Sword School.”

Prince Eastluck finally let out a sigh of relief. He immediately fell to his knees, then kowtowed towards the skies. “Thank you, senior Darknorth!”

It would indeed be difficult for him to serve for three centuries as a servant in a winehouse, and one who could not fight back when struck or argue when cursed at. But if he was to be expelled from the Sword School...in the past, he had offended many with his arrogance. If it wasn’t

for his status as a disciple of the Sword School, he probably would've died without a burial spot long ago. No matter what, he was still a disciple of the Sword School; all he had to do was be tempered within the red dust of the mortal world for three centuries.

"Your disciple swears to obey. May the Dao of the Heavens bear witness." Prince Eastluck instantly swore an oath.

"Go. From this day forth, you are no longer a prince; you were nothing more than an ordinary mortal servant." Celestial Immortal Triscorpion flicked his sleeves. "Come see me in three hundred years."

"Yes, Master." Eastluck immediately left respectfully, then transformed into a streak of light and flew into the skies by himself.

Triscorpion couldn't even be bothered to take a second look at this disciple of his.

He was a Diremonster by birth, and possessed of a strange temperament. In the past, he absolutely doted on Eastluck, but now that Eastluck had caused such a disaster, resulting in him being captured... Triscorpion focused all of his resentment on Eastluck. He no longer felt any positive feelings towards Eastluck at all. If it hadn't been for the fact that Ji Ning and Daoless had come to an agreement on Eastluck's fate, Triscorpion would've expelled that little bastard from the school already.

"Three centuries. Hmph." Triscorpion immediately teleported away and disappeared.

Even after three centuries, when this disciple came back to see him, he wouldn't be in the mood to teach him sincerely. This was because he now detested this disciple of his. This disciple might be talented, which is why Triscorpion had previously favored him, but now...he felt repulsed by him! So what if the kid was talented? How many 'talented' figures would be able to overcome the Celestial Tribulation?

However...no one would've thought that after this arrogant, wayward Prince Eastluck spent three centuries as a servant in the mortal world, he would become modest, low-key, humble, and courteous. He was like a piece of rough jade that had been carved and polished until it shone with

brilliance. He would overcome his tribulation and become a Celestial Immortal, then be accepted into the Buddhist Sangha. In fact, during the final Endwar, he would become a general of the Nuwa Alliance who would fight shoulder-to-shoulder with Ji Ning.

Ji Ning himself would never have imagined this happening, of course. He crippled the first guard because he could sense that the guard had planned to kill him. The prince, however, wasn't beyond saving. Thus, he devised a path that he thought would be able to grind away the prince's arrogance and pride. That was the extent of his considerations. By now, Ning's attention was focused towards his sword-arts and his struggle against the Seamless Gate.

He had planned to stay on East Phoenix world and train there for three or four months, but True Immortal Daoless had explained to him that the other twenty-six worlds only had remnants of the [Five Treasures] sword-arts, whereas Sword Immortal world had the complete version. In other words, all of the remnants could be found within Sword Immortal world; there was no point in wasting time on the other worlds.

Ning still felt that the other worlds were worth spending some time on, but he decided that ten days per world was enough.

And so...he began to wander through one minor world after another.

Some worlds had sword-arts left behind on mountain walls. Others had sword-scars left behind on the wild landscape, in the form of rivers and creeks. Still others had sword-scars that carved out valleys and gorges within the forests. These had all been left behind in a casual manner by Daofather Fujū. Stargold beads in hand, and with Empyrean God Ninefangs by his side, Ning walked and meditated his way through all of the minor worlds.

Ning often made progress by comparing the nine chaos seals to the sword-arts. He spent at least three or four days in each world, up to a maximum of two months at most.

After he finished wandering the twenty-sixth world, a full year had passed. Finally, Ning arrived at the last of the Twenty-Seven Worlds of

Fuju. The most important world...Sword Immortal world.

Sword Immortal world.

There wasn't a single mortal within this minor world. At the very center of this minor world, there were five mountain peaks, each one taller than the last. The strange thing was, the first peak was a thousand kilometers tall, the second was two thousand kilometers tall...the pattern continued all the way to the fifth, which was five thousand kilometers tall.

For a minor world to have such tall mountains was simply inconceivable! The mountain peaks stabbed high up into the uppermost layer of clouds.

"The Five Treasure Peaks!"

Ning and Ninefangs appeared in the air amidst them. They stared at the five towering mountain peaks. The majestic aura of might and pressure that swept out towards them from the mountain peaks caused Ning to feel startled. Ninefang's face even turned pale for a moment before he was able to steady himself.

"What a powerful aura. I was caught off-guard and felt a bit nauseous just now." Ninefangs said with surprise, "Ordinary Celestial Immortals probably wouldn't be able to endure it."

"How could the mountain peaks that hold the legendary [Five Treasures] sword-art not be extraordinary? The [Five Treasures] sword-art is the number one sword-art of the Three Realms," Ning said with a laugh. "Auras are invisible and formless; whether or not you can endure an aura is up to the strength of your Dao-heart. Ninefangs, although Empyrean Gods don't have to worry about going insane, the Dao-heart is still important. You need to work on yours."

Ninefangs nodded. "Yes, Manorlord."

Of the seven Empyrean Gods under Ning's command, Ninefangs had the weakest foundation. The others had accompanied Daoist Threelives in countless battles during the Primordial Era, after all. Back then, Ninefangs had merely been a Void-level Fiendgod. He only made his breakthrough

within the Starseizer world, and he hadn't experienced many actual battles afterwards. Given that he also didn't have a good master to teach him, he was lacking in many areas.

“The number one sword-art of the Three Realms. I heard that it is incomparably marvelous.” Ning had heard many legends of the [Five Treasures] sword-art. Each legend was more fanciful than the last. The more legends he heard, the more curious Ning became.

Whoosh! Whoosh!

Ning and Ninefangs went flying towards the Five Treasure Peaks.

Chapter 15: Swordforce

Three streaks of light suddenly flew towards the direction of Ji Ning and Ninefangs.

“Eh?” Ning took a careful look, instantly recognizing that one of the three was True Immortal Daoless. He had never seen the other two before.

“Is this fellow Daoist Ji Ning?” A rather ugly-looking man called out.

“I heard long ago from junior apprentice-brother Daoless tha fellow Daoist Ji Ning was going to come here. We’ve been waiting here a long time, but we were unable to find you. My heart was burning with impatience.” A handsome youth smiled merrily as he spoke.

Ning laughed, “I’ve made the three of you wait so long, fellow Daoists. I’m ashamed, quite ashamed.”

“We live right here on Sword Immortal world. We’d still be here even if we weren’t waiting for you,” the youth laughed.

Ning laughed as well. “I’ve already met fellow Daoist Daoless. The muscular fellow must be Empyrean God Hiddenwillow, while this one must be the ‘Sword Immortal of the Outer Heavens’, fellow Daoist Jimin. I’ve long heard of fellow Daoist Jimin’s illustrious reputation. Today, I finally have the chance to meet you.”

After Daofather Fujū had perished, many of his followers had scattered. These days, the Sword School only had three Empyrean Gods and True Immortals left.

They were True Immortal Daoless, Empyrean God Hiddenwillow, and True Immortal Jimin.

True Immortal Jimin had been the first to join the school. Empyrean God Hiddenwillow had come later, while True Immortal Daoless had been the last. True Immortal Jimin possessed truly extraordinary power. There were only two individuals in the Three Realms who had mastered the entire [Five Treasures] sword-art; one was a Daofather, while the other was True Immortal Jimin. After he mastered it, he instantly rose in power

to become one of the most supreme of True Immortals, on par with the likes of Lu Dongbin, and so he was reverently titled the ‘Sword Immortal of the Outer Heavens’.

“So this is fellow Daoist Ji Ning?”

“Fellow Daoist Darknorth actually arrived as well.”

“I heard of fellow Daoist Darknorth’s exploits in the Crimsonbright Realmwar. He used his sword to suppress a Daofather golem...”

“Fellow Daoist Ji Ning!”

Suddenly, one voice after another began to ring out as more streaks of light flew towards them.

True Immortal Daoless hurriedly explained, “These are the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals who are at Sword Immortal world to study the [Five Treasures] sword-art. They naturally are on our side as well. Prior to the storm arriving, Sword Immortal world usually saw thousands of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals gathering here, with the occasional Daofather as well. However, now that the storm has arrived, and given that many of the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Three Realms have already visited this place, there are now very few people here. Aside from the three of us and the two of you, fellow Daoist Ji Ning, there are thirty-nine other Empyrean Gods and True Immortals currently present.”

These individuals all belonged to the Nuwa Alliance, and they all knew of Ning. Naturally, they held Ning in high esteem. There were very, very few people who could have an impact on a Realmwar the way Ning did, after all. Even the likes of Redsnow had to join forces with the rest of the seven Empyrean Gods in order to possess such tremendous power. Given that Ning was able to match a Daofather golem in might just by commanding a million Immortals...which Empyrean God or True Immortal would dare treat him with discourtesy?

Even supreme Sword Immortals like True Immortal Jimin, who had mastered the [Five Treasures] sword-art, treated Ning with great courtesy.

After chatting for some time, everyone went their separate ways. They

were all here to train in sword-arts, after all; this was what truly mattered.

“There are some other fellow Daoists who you haven’t met yet; they should still be busy with their meditations,” True Immortal Jimin said with a laugh. The three leaders of the Sword School accompanied Ji Ning and Ninefangs as they flew forward on a cloud.

“Right.” Ning nodded. “I can already see them.”

He was able to see the five towering peaks in the distance. The peaks, the valleys, the distant mountain lakes...there were Empyrean Gods and True Immortals seated in the lotus position throughout the five peaks. All of them were rather casually spread out, and normally none of them would bother each other.

“That one over there is fellow Daoist Jadesky,” True Immortal Jimin said as he pointed to the first mountain peak, where a black-robed man was seated atop a giant boulder.

“That one over there is fellow Daoist Icefeather.” He pointed to a barely-visible white-robed youth that was seated in the lotus position deep within a mountain cave.

All of them were seated in the lotus position, as unmoving as boulders. It was hard to tell how long they had been there.

“The two of them have given up everything to focus on the [Five Treasures] sword-art,” True Immortal Jimin said with a sigh. “The others are at most observing and studying. They’ll occasionally gain an insight, but they aren’t truly training.”

“Given up everything?” Ning was surprised. “Can it be that the [Five Treasures] sword-art really is as terrifying as the legends say?”

The nearby True Immortal Daoless chuckled. “Some legends are exaggerated, but other legends don’t go far enough.”

“Oh?” Both Ning and Ninefangs listened attentively. The legends regarding the [Five Treasures] sword-art were quite fanciful. Supposedly, not even Daofathers would dare to casually train in it.

“The [Five Treasures] sword-art is indeed incomparably marvelous and mysterious,” True Immortal Daoless laughed. “It is completely different from any other sword-art of the Three Realms.”

Ning nodded. He had noticed this as well.

“Other sword-arts are founded upon the Heavenly Daos, but the [Five Treasures] sword-art walks a different path,” True Immortal Daoless said. “If you just train as though you are dipping a toe into the water to test the temperature...you’ll at most gain an occasional bit of insight. If, however, you start your training from the very first chapter of the [Five Treasures] sword-art...then some of the things described in the legends will occur.”

Ning’s face changed.

True Immortal Daoless said softly, “All the other Daos you have gained insight into...Heavenly Daos, Grand Daos, ordinary Daos...you will slowly begin to forget them. They will completely vanish from your memories.”

“The more you train in the [Five Treasures] sword-art, the more of the other Daos you will forget.”

“Once you beginning training in the third chapter of the [Five Treasures] sword-art, aside from the Dao of the Sword, you will forget all other Daos!” True Immortal Jimin looked towards Ning.

Ning nodded slowly. “So that’s how it is.”

The nearby True Immortal Jimin said, “The [Five Treasures] sword-art has four chapters. The first chapter is recorded on the walls of the first mountain. The second chapter is on the second mountain, and the third chapter is on the third mountain. The final, fourth chapter is naturally on the fourth mountain. As for the fifth mountain...my master, Daofather Fujū, used to live there when he was alive. It holds a minor cavern-estate within it.”

“Once you begin training in the first chapter, your insights into all other Daos shall be affected; slowly, they’ll begin to recede. The deeper your insights into the [Five Treasures] sword-art becomes, the more insights into the other Daos you shall lose.”

“After you finish the third chapter, all other Daos shall be lost. The only path remaining is the Dao of the Sword!”

“The fourth chapter is the most difficult chapter of all. The most terrifying outcome...is that you will master the third chapter, but be unable to master the fourth.”

“Once you master the fourth chapter, you’ll have mastered the entire [Five Treasures] sword-art, and you’ll truly understand how marvelous and divine this sword-art is.” True Immortal Jimin sighed with feeling.

Ning was puzzled. “Training in the [Five Treasures] sword-art will cause your insights into the other Daos to be lost? Is it possible to retrain and regain them after losing them?”

“It’s possible, but...” True Immortal shook his head. “When you begin training in the other Daos, you’ll begin to gradually lose your insights into the [Five Treasures] sword-arts.”

“What?!” Ning was shocked.

“Thus, you have a choice; either train in the various other Daos or only train in the [Five Treasures] sword-art.” True Immortal Jimin chuckled. “But of course, if you completely master the entire [Five Treasures] sword-art, it’ll be completely memorized as a perfect whole within your mind. You can begin to train in other Daos once more, and by then you will no longer be impacted.”

The nearby Empyrean God Hiddenwillow interjected, “But the fourth chapter is far too difficult. To master the first chapter, you have to have at least reached the first stage of swordforce. As for the second chapter, you’ll need to have reached the second stage of swordforce. In turn, mastering the fourth chapter requires you to have at least reached the fourth stage of swordforce...and that’s just a prerequisite! Even if you have reached that level, you still might be unable to succeed.”

Ning nodded. He had heard these stories before.

But the [Five Treasures] sword-art truly was too powerful. After mastering it, the speed of one’s sword would exceed the limitations of the

Heavenly Daos themselves! True Immortal Jimin, for example, was one of the most supreme True Immortals of the Three Realms. Once he broke through to become a Daofather, he would immediately become a supreme one thanks to his [Five Treasures] sword-art, even though his other insights were comparatively inferior to those of the other Daofathers.

This was because the speed of his sword would be faster than anything else.

This was the reason why the [Five Treasures] sword-art was so alluring.

“Once you master the entire [Five Treasures] sword-art, you’ll be able to enter the cavern-estate in the fifth peak which Master left behind.” True Immortal Jimin pointed towards the distant, tallest peak. “Master died in the primordial chaos, but before he entered it, he gave us certain instructions. He said that if something unexpected happened to him, we were to make the [Five Treasures] sword-art available to the public. Any Fiendgod Body Refiner who has mastered the [Five Treasures] sword-art can enter his cavern-estate and receive his most important legacy.”

“Oh?” Ning was startled.

“In the countless years that have passed since Master died, unfathomable numbers of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals have come here to meditate. Even True Gods and Daofathers have come here! However, very, very few are willing to give up all their insights into the other Daos and focus solely on the Dao of the Sword! This is especially true for Ki Refiners. Once they lose their insights into the Dao, they’ll be unable to control the Immortal energy within their bodies. They’ll begin to go insane and die from the deviant energies.”

Ning nodded.

“Ki Refiner Daofathers, for example; they are Daofathers because they have mastered a Heavenly Dao. But what if they forgot that Heavenly Dao? Given how utterly enormous the Great Firmament energy in their bodies are, once they forgot their Daos, they would be completely unable to control that energy. It would deviate and possibly even detonate, causing their souls to be shattered and destroyed.”

“Thus, amongst Ki Refiners, only Sword Immortals can train in this sword-art, and they have to at least be at the Pure Yang True Immortal level.”

“As for Fiendgods? It’s true that they can train in it without having to worry about their energy deviating. But the exalted True Gods...most of them have trained for countless years and have extremely deep insights into the Dao. How many of them are willing to give up all of their insights? From the Primordial Era to the modern era, there have been only a total of three True Gods who have truly come here to train in the [Five Treasures] sword-art.”

“However, Fiendgods by nature are weaker when it comes to comprehension abilities. Those three True Gods in particular were not exceptionally talented with regards to the Dao of the Sword. It is hard to force your way into getting insights, and so in the end they all gave up,” True Immortal Jimin said.

In truth, those three True Gods were some of the weakest amongst their peers, which was why they had been willing to discard everything to train in this art! They had thought that if they gained this astonishing sword-art which allowed the speed of their swords to surpass the limits of the Dao of the Heavens, they would instantly become some of the most powerful True Gods alive. But alas, they had no talent in this field, and so it was too difficult for them to succeed.

Take Ji Ning as an example. He was able to advance very rapidly in the Dao of the Sword, but if he trained to train in the Grand Dao of Time? He would most likely progress at an unbearably slow rate.

“The two who truly succeeded in mastering it were both Ki Refiners. I am one of them. The other is Daofather Holyflame. Because both of us are Ki Refiners, neither of us were able to receive Master’s legacy. However, Daofather Holyflame can now be considered the number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms,” True Immortal Jimin said with a laugh.

Ning nodded.

Daofather Holyflame had grown up in a peculiar way. His mother had

been a Celestial Immortal known as Princess Iron Fan, while his father had been an Empyrean God known as the Bull Demon King, one of the Seven Great Diremonster Saints of the Primordial Era. Daofather Holyflame had been born with tremendous talent in fire, and had thus been known as the 'Red Boy'. Thanks to his incredible talent, he had smoothly sailed through his cultivation to become a Celestial Immortal, and the samadhi truefire he nourished in his body was especially powerful.

In the end, he became apprenticed to the Buddhist Guanyin and had become her follower. 1

Eventually, the Primordial Era ended and the Three Realms were born. He ended up breaking through to become a Pure Yang True Immortal. After Daofather Fujū died, he came to meditate on the [Five Treasures] sword-art, and he was absolutely crazy in his training. Buddhism? His parents? He discarded and forgot about all such things...and he actually managed to succeed in one go! After he mastered the [Five Treasures] sword-art, his power and status instantly skyrocketed. He then spent centuries to painstakingly regain the Grand Daos which he had forgotten.

More than thirty thousand years after he mastered the [Five Treasures] sword-art, he mastered the Heavenly Dao of Fire and became a Daofather. After that, he became known by the exalted title of Daofather Holyflame!

He personally welcomed his mother Iron Fan back home, but he didn't pay much attention to the Bull Demon King. 2

In addition, his sword had become the fastest sword of all the Three Realms! Many Immortals and Fiendgods believed him to be the number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms. However, Daofather Holyflame's foundation was a bit weak, as he had only mastered a single Heavenly Dao, the Heavenly Dao of Fire! Even his swordforce was merely at the fourth stage, and he had yet to reach the fifth stage. Thus, not everyone agreed that he was the number one Sword Immortal!

Clearly, however, he was one of the most supreme Daofathers around.

Those who were more powerful than him during the Primordial Era now

had to treat him with reverence. This was one of the marvels of time. Perhaps, in the future...a young fellow who was currently weak would end up becoming so powerful that Holyflame himself would have to treat him with reverence.

“You now know about all the pros and cons of the [Five Elements] sword-art.” True Immortal Jimin looked towards Ning. “It’s up to you whether you wish to train in it or not.”

Ning nodded.

He had heard these legends long ago; the only difference today made was that he now knew a bit more than he had in the past. In truth, the year he had spent on the other worlds was a testament to Ning’s decision! He was going to embark on the path of the Sword Immortal, and that path alone! For the sake of the [Five Treasures] sword-art, Ning had long ago decided to give up his insights into the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop and the other Daos. Right now, the reason he was powerful was because of his heartforce and his divine abilities, such as the [Starseizing Hand] and the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]! He wouldn’t forget any of them.

The only things he would forget were his insights into the Dao!

“We won’t disturb you any further.” True Immortal Jimin and the other two immediately left.

“Ninefangs, I’m going to go take a look at the [Five Treasures] sword-art. If there’s nothing urgent, don’t interrupt me,” Ning said. Ninefangs hurriedly assented.

Ning flew far into the distance, heading towards the first chapter of the [Five Treasures] sword-art.

*

1. This is a story straight out of Journey to the West. The story of Princess Iron Fan, the Bull Demon King, and Red Boy is one of the more famous encounters that Sun Wukong had to face.

2. In the stories, Red Boy lived with his mother, who was estranged from her husband Bull Demon King because the latter was a terrible playboy and adulterer who cheated on her all the time.

Chapter 16: Training in Solitude

The Five Treasure Peaks were ancient beyond belief. A complete version of the number one sword-art of the Three Realms, the [Five Treasures] sword-art, had been left behind on them, giving them an aura of being even more exalted than the Dao of the Heavens.

Solitude.

Stillness.

The aura and presence emanating from the Five Treasure Peaks was enough to ensure that neither birds nor bugs could survive here. The only living creatures here were the forty-plus Empyrean Gods and True Immortals, but given how vast the Five Treasure Peaks were, the cultivators weren't particularly eye-catching.

"It really is rare to find such a quiet place." Ji Ning landed, then stood there upon the wilderness, head raised as he stared at the criss-crossing sword stances that had been left atop the distant mountain cliffs.

"Whew." Ning's heart clenched as a series of sword techniques began to flood into his brain. This sword-art was ancient, profound, and beyond the Heavenly Daos themselves.

"Truly inconceivable. How could such a divine sword-art exist in the world?" Ning was only able to recover after a long period of time had passed. A cloud appeared beneath his feet as he began to slowly fly upwards. The first peak was a thousand kilometers high, and so it naturally pierced far up into the clouds. As for the first chapter of the [Five Treasures] sword-art, it covered more than half of the mountain walls of the first peak.

Ning continued to view the sword-art as he flew upwards, and various sword stances began to flash past his eyes. Ning viewed them very slowly, taking a full hour before finishing his viewing of the first chapter.

"The first chapter is truly as vast as an ocean." Ning sighed in amazement. This was definitely the most complicated sword-art he had

ever seen; just the first chapter alone contained a total of 3729 different stances, each one incomparably marvelous.

“Mm.” Ning transformed into a streak of light, charging back downwards. As he landed on the ground, he pointed off into the distance. Instantly, the power of Heaven and Earth began to activate, quickly causing an ordinary thatched cottage to take form. Ning stepped into it, then sat down into the lotus position. He faced the Five Treasure Peaks, then closed his eyes and began to think back to what he had seen.

The sword stances began to replay through his mind as he began to attempt to fathom them.

Ning knew what his advantages were and what his disadvantages were!

He had been tremendously lucky, as he had the chance to learn divine abilities like the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] and the [Starseizing Hand]; these two divine abilities were already enough to allow him to stand at the very peak of power for Empyrean Gods! But his goal wasn't to be a powerful Empyrean God...it was to become a True God and a Daofather! During the final Endwar, one had to have the power of a True God or a Daofather in order to be of use.

In addition, he had to become a supremely powerful True God and Daofather. In fact, he wanted to try to work hard to reach the level of the leaders of the Daoist Path and the Buddhist Sangha...or even the level of Nuwa and Pangu!

But how was he supposed to reach this level?

Ning knew very well that compared to the other major powers, his greatest weakness was that he hadn't trained for very long. This was a tremendous disadvantage. The storm had already begun to press down upon them, and the final, terrifying explosion wouldn't be too far off. He didn't actually have that much time. If he wanted to take things step-by-step, first mastering the various Grand Daos and then slowly work on the Heavenly Dao of Water, then the rest of the Five Elements so as to reach the level of Lord Buddha or Daoist Three Purities...without question, it would take an unfathomable amount of time.

He didn't have enough time.

What could he do?

His only choice was to make a lateral thrust, to make an unconventional gambit!

His greatest talent currently lay in heartforce. The heart was an invisible, formless thing, but it was possible to make great breakthroughs in it. Right now, Ning had already reached the fourth stage in heartforce! If he was to reach the fifth stage, he would instantly be comparable to the most supreme of Daofathers. Long ago, Houyi had reached the fifth stage of heartforce as an Empyrean God and thus became capable of killing True Gods and Daofathers!

Master Subhuti believed that Ning's talent with the sword was even greater than his talent in heartforce. Supposedly, if swordforce reached the fifth stage, it would be no weaker than heartforce of the fifth stage. But how was he to reach such a level?

The best choice was to train in the number one sword-art of the Three Realms, the [Five Treasures] sword-art! The [Five Treasures] sword-art was even capable of allowing the speed of his sword to exceed the limitations of the Heavenly Daos; it would definitely allow him to be the most powerful figure amongst his peers. Even if his peers also mastered fifth stage swordforce, if he mastered the [Five Treasures] sword-art, he would still be far more powerful than them.

"I'll walk these two paths simultaneously. So long as one of them succeeds...I, Ji Ning, will stand at the very peak of the Three Realms!"

Ning knew very well that both paths were extremely difficult paths to walk...but if you wanted to stand at the top, how could you avoid taking a difficult path? Others wouldn't even have the chance to make an attempt like this. Ning had both the chance and the necessarily talent...of course he had to go all-out!

Not just for himself; it was also for his family, for his loved ones. If he didn't have enough power, not only would he be doomed, even Brightmoon and the others would find it hard to survive.

Ning completely subsumed himself into his training. Every so often, he would leave the thatched cottage to take another look at the first chapter of the [Five Treasures] sword-art. Although he had already memorized it all, the sword stances on the cliff had been personally left behind by Daofather Fujū, and it contained Fujū's sword-intent. Ning was able to memorize the stances, but he wasn't able to memorize the sword-intent.

This was the reason why, in times of peace, thousands of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals would come here to cultivate, with each cultivation session often lasting a million years or even longer.

Time passed, one day after the other.

The entire Five Treasure Peaks were completely silent. All of the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals were as silent as deadwood, completely focused on the sword!

"The Dao...is slipping away..."

Ning opened his eyes.

The Dao was vanishing from his mind, one strand at a time. No matter how hard Ning tried to recollect those memories, he was unable to do so. They had truly been lost.

"Continue." Ning shut his eyes, continuing his meditations.

If he lost his other Daos, he lost them. For the sake of the sword...it would all be worth it.

Losing the other Daos represented that Ning was continuously progressing in his understanding of the [Five Treasures] sword-art. Ning also had the nine chaos seals to meditate over as well. As time passed and as his insights deepened, Ning began to realize that the nine chaos seals were even more profound and even more difficult to fathom. By comparison, the 3729 sword stances of the first chapter of the [Five Treasures] sword-art were simply meant to familiarize Ning with a system that was different from all other sword-arts, a system that transcended the Heavenly Daos themselves.

The [Five Treasures] sword-art was more detailed, but its power was also

a bit weaker.

It made sense, truth be told. The nine chaos seals...not even Daoist Three Purities or Mother Nuwa (prior to the destruction of the Primordial Era) had been able to completely master them. The [Five Treasures] sword-art, however, had been created by Daofather Fujū.

Just by comparing them, it was clear which one was superior. However, both transcended the Dao of the Heavens, and so they could be compared to each other.

“Finally...I’ve lost the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop.” Midway through his training, Ning suddenly could sense that his Grand Dao of the Waterdrop was no longer perfect and complete. He paused for a moment...but then he once more began to calmly continue his meditations.

The Dao continued to leak away from him in tiny strands...but his understanding of the [Five Treasures] sword-art grew increasingly refined.

“Five treasures...five treasures...” Ning rose to his feet, walking out of the thatched cottage. He raised his head to stare at the distant first peak, then sighed softly to himself. “It truly is a treasure. Only when you truly begin to train in it will you understand how vast and marvelous it is. I really have no idea how Daofather Fujū could’ve developed such an unfathomably powerful sword-art in the past. How could a major power like him have perished in such a silent, noiseless manner?”

Daofather Fujū’s death was a mystery. He was so formidable...how could he have perished?

Why was it that before he went into the primordial chaos, he intentionally left behind his legacy within the fifth peak? It was as though he knew that there was a chance he would die.

“Did he encounter Outsiders in the primordial chaos who killed him? Or did he encounter a mysterious, dangerous area within the infinite primordial chaos which he had to enter despite the danger?” Ning was unable to come up with the answer, and so he stopped guessing. The primordial chaos was simply too vast and mysterious. The nine chaos seals themselves had come from the primordial chaos.

“Training in the first chapter alone has made my sword far faster than it was in the past.” Ning had already mastered the first chapter of the [Five Treasures] sword-art.

The first chapter wasn’t that difficult; the majority of those who were truly determined to train in it would succeed in their efforts. But of course, one had to have at least reached the first stage of swordforce to succeed.

“Come out.”

A Darknorth sword emerged, appearing in Ning’s hands. He began to execute the sword-art.

He didn’t use any of his Immortal energy or his divine power. He was like an ordinary mortal training with the sword.

Chopping...piercing...slashing...deflecting...these were the most basic of sword stances, but in Ning’s hands they seemed to flow together like water. As Ning continued with his swordplay, a layer of white-gold light began to appear atop his sword. The dazzling, white-gold halo caused his sword to possess inconceivable might.

It made his sword faster. Sharper. Even space itself began to crackle and tear.

This was the second stage of swordforce...the ‘Dazzling Sun’ stage.

The first stage of swordforce was known as the ‘Silver Moon’ stage, because at this stage a layer of silvery-white light would appear atop the sword.

“So, without even realizing it, I’ve already reached the second stage of swordforce.” Ning laughed.

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Mount Innerheart.

Within the Daoist monastery.

Subhuti sat there with his eyes closed. In truth, he was watching over the entire Three Realms. The Three Realms were currently in a state of chaos; as the most accomplished expert of the Three Realms in the art of

spacetime, Subhuti would naturally keep an eye on all places.

“Eh?” Subhuti opened his eyes, a trace of a smile within them. “This disciple of mine has actually reached the second stage of swordforce. Mmm...I imagine that he’s probably calmed down by now. It’s time to let him exchange blows with the Seamless Gate.”

Given Subhuti’s abilities, he had long ago found some suitable headquarters of the Seamless Gate for Ji Ning to act against.

However...if he always let Ji Ning attack so furiously, Ji Ning would probably die in his fury. Thus, Subhuti wanted to ensure that he was in control of the general tempo of things. He wouldn’t let Ji Ning get involved in an excessive slaughter, but he had to allow Ji Ning to reach his goal of forcing the Seamless Gate to bow its head. Thus...Subhuti needed to handle things with precision.

Chapter 17: The Five Monarchs

The towering Five Treasures Peaks.

Ji Ning was staring at the sword stances engraved upon the mountainside of the first peak, sensing the sword-intent radiating from it. Suddenly, the space around him turned blurry as an old man in Daoist robes suddenly manifested.

“Master.” Ning immediately called out respectfully upon seeing him.

“Work hard to learn the [Five Treasures] sword-art. If you master it, you’ll have a greater chance to survive this storm,” Subhuti said with a laugh. “Now...prior to this, you said you wish to act against the Seamless Gate, I believe?”

Ning’s eyes lit up. He nodded repeatedly. “Yes.”

“The Seamless Gate is spread across the Three Realms. Some worlds have more experts, some worlds have fewer.” Subhuti continued, “Realms such as the one Crimsonbright ruled over are comparatively weak. Your homeland, the Grand Xia, for example; prior to the Seamless Gate’s actions, there were almost no Empyrean Gods or True Immortals within it.”

Ning nodded repeatedly. “Master, I want to go to the major worlds of supreme powers. Killing Loose Immortals and Celestial Immortals won’t affect the Seamless Gate that much, unless I kill an absolutely enormous amount of them. I’m going to be launching sneak attacks; there’s not going to be enough time for me to kill that many of them. That’s why I want to primarily focus on Empyrean Gods and True Immortals.”

Only the deaths of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals would cause heartache for the Seamless Gate.

“In the Three Realms...the strongest force on our side is that of the human race,” Subhuti said. “The human race is led by the Three Emperors of Mankind: Suiren, Fuxi, and Shennong. The three of them are on the same level as the leaders of the Daoist Path and Buddhist Sangha.”

“Second to them are the Five Monarchs. These five Monarchs were all former rulers of the human race. The final one, Xia Yu, completely unified all humans under his rule; only then did they all become true rulers. Ever since then, the Primordial Imperial Clan which rules the human race has been led by the Xia clan.” 1

Ning nodded.

He knew that during the Primordial Era, Xia Yu had tamed the floods with his divine abilities, blessing the lands with kindness and benevolence. Even the Three Emperors acknowledged him and supported him, causing his rule to become even more stable and firm. And of course, Xia Yu himself possessed tremendous power. How could someone be considered a ‘Monarch’ of the human race be weak? Even Ning’s own senior apprentice-brother, Sun Wukong, had acquired the golden staff he used from Xia Yu, who had made it for him. 2”

“Thus, in terms of major worlds...the major worlds which are controlled by the Primordial Imperial Clan are all extremely powerful. The Seamless Gate has stationed many troops in those worlds, and the battles between the experts there are all incredibly savage. If you attack, the Seamless Gate will immediately send their vast armies to tie you down. I recommend that you do not go there,” Subhuti said.

Ning understood. The battlegrounds between the Primordial Imperial Clan and the Seamless Gate were some of the most terrifying places of the entire Three Realms. Both sides had concentrated enormous amounts of power there.

“The realms ruled over by the other four Monarchs, however, are comparatively much weaker. But of course, they are still much stronger than the Crimsonbright Realm,” Subhuti said. “Which of the realms ruled over by the other four Monarchs would you like to go to?”

“Which one? Any one of them works,” Ning said hurriedly. He just wanted to kill the Seamless Gate’s people. The location didn’t really matter.

“One of the major worlds under Monarch Zhuanxu, the Winterherald

world, holds Youngflame Freak within it. He has a total of eighteen clones spread throughout the Three Realms, with sixteen of them being within the Winterherald world,” Subhuti said. Although Youngflame Freak’s life-preserving methods were formidable, they were nothing to Subhuti.

Ning’s eyes lit up. “Does the Winterherald world have many Empyrean Gods and True Immortals within it?”

“Although war has yet to come to the Winterherald world, the Seamless Gate has a total of nine Empyrean Gods and True Immortals already stationed there,” Subhuti said.

Ning sighed in amazement.

Monarch Zhuanxu was one of the Five Monarchs who had once ruled over the human race. Naturally, he had many powerful human experts following him. He himself was also exceedingly powerful, and in truth, the ‘Kindwater’ 3 clan was a branch of Zhuanxu’s clan. But of course, the Kindwater clan was on a lower level than the Xiamang clan, much like how Monarch Zhuanxu was on a lower level than Monarch Xia Yu.

“Nine Empyrean Gods and True Immortals...fine. I choose this world.” Ning nodded.

“This is a map of the forces of the Seamless Gate that are spread throughout the entire Zhuanxu Realm.” Subhuti handed over a furled scroll to Ning, then instructed, “But you must not tarry overlong in each battle!”

“Your disciple understands.” Ning nodded.

“Hurry up and look at it, then destroy it,” Subhuti instructed. Ning immediately opened up and began to memorize the contents of the scroll.

The scroll had very detailed notes regarding the disposition of forces of both sides across the thirty-nine major worlds of the Zhuanxu Realm. The locations of the sixteen clones of Youngflame Freak were all marked out as well.

Whoosh. Ning flared the divine power in his hands, reducing the scroll to dust.

“Good.” Subhuti nodded, then disappeared into thin air.

A hint of a killing intent flashed past Ning’s eyes. “The time has finally come.”

“Ninefangs.” Ning’s form blurred momentarily, then he appeared next to Ninefangs, who was napping next to a nearby thatched cottage.

“Manorlord.” Ninefangs hurriedly woke up and rose to his feet.

“Go back to the Starseizer world for now,” Ning instructed, “And carry out the plan as we previously discussed.”

Ninefangs instantly understood what Ning was planning.

“Yes,” Ninefangs said respectfully. He then allowed Ning to pull him directly into the Starseizer world. By now, after Ning had completely mastered and bound the Starseizing Manor, Ning realized that the Starseizer world was actually hidden within a special region of the Starseizing Manor. Mother Nuwa had actually created the Starseizer world in that region.

He was now completely capable of drawing others straight into the Starseizer world or teleporting people out from it. There was no need to go through the Starseizing Manor first, though of course this was only possible because he had already fully bound it.

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The Zhuanxu Realm. The Winterherald major world.

Winterherald was the world where the great army which Monarch Zhuanxu had once used to unify the human race, the Winterherald Army, was stationed. The various matters of the Winterherald world were all decided upon by the general and the deputy general of the army. Normally, this was quite a peaceful world, but ever since the Seamless Gate had begun to infiltrate it, a large number of minor clashes had begun to erupt, causing the Winterherald world to become rather chaotic.

But of course...

These were all small-scale battles. They were still far away from

launching the campaign against this major world, to say nothing of launching a Realmwar. A war against Monarch Zhuanyu, one of the Five Monarchs of the Primordial Imperial Clan, would definitely come towards the very end of the campaign against the three thousand major worlds. The only thing the Seamless Gate was doing right now was tying down his forces, preventing him from being able to easily reinforce the other Daofathers.

“This really is a different place.” Ning stood atop a mountain peak, staring at the vast world. His heartforce had spread out to cover it long ago.

Heartforce, ephemeral and invisible...one had to reach the fourth stage to be able to cover an entire world with it. Most importantly of all, there was almost no way to sense someone else’s heartforce, as it was completely traceless; the only possible way was to possess heartforce on the same level. For example, when Ning had made his breakthrough on the Grand Xia, he had unconsciously spread his heartforce out to cover the entire Grand Xia without Daofather Ink Bamboo or Daofather Crimsonbright noticing it. This was because, although they were born as a True God and a True Fiend of tremendous power, they weren’t particularly strong in heartforce. Neither had reached the fourth level.

Old Man Yuan and some of the supreme major powers, in turn, had only reached the fourth stage of heartforce.

Only Houyi had ever reached the fifth stage.

Of course, the Godking of the Seamless Gate would’ve been able to notice that Ning had spread his heartforce out, but the Godking had been in the Fifth World, not the Grand Xia. He was able to watch the battle and mentally converse with Daofather Ink Bamboo through sending his coresense out through the Void and into the Grand Xia, but coresense alone wouldn’t be able to discover heartforce.

“The Winterherald world is actually very tightly governed and ruled. The Celestial Immortals and Fiendgods are all arranged into armies,” Ning sighed internally. “The Grand Xia only formed Immortal armies when

forced to do so, but the army of Monarch Zhu anxu has existed since the Primordial Era. I imagine that their teamwork is far superior as well.”

“Right. First, I’ll go wipe out the sixteen clones of Youngflame Freak.”

“Youngflame Freak truly is a cautious fellow. On the surface, he appears to be accompanying Azurefox in the Crimsonbright Realm, but his other bodies were squirreled away here at the Zhu anxu Realm.” Ning’s body transformed as he used the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], instantly becoming a bit taller. He now had the aura of a Celestial Immortal.

Swoosh.

Ning disappeared into thin air.

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The Winterherald world. The Seamless Gate had three headquarters here, each of which had three Empyrean Gods and True Immortals guarding over them, along with many Immortals and layers of formations. Even if the experts of the Winterherald world assaulted them, they would be able to hold on.

Aside from these three headquarters, there were also 182 bases spread throughout the world. These bases could be withdrawn or abandoned at a moment’s notice, or be used to launch sneak attacks when needed. They were more than enough to create chaos throughout the Winterherald world. To the Winterherald world, however, these bases were like ants that would occasionally give them a bite. But if they were to actually attack those bases...given the Seamless Gate’s intelligence abilities, the bases would be instantly evacuated. And, most importantly of all, those bases were so weak that they weren’t really worth annihilating.

“Hmph. Yeah, yeah. Keep on killing. So many of us died during the Crimsonbright Realmwar, and now you want us to go kill others?” An ugly old man was eating some meat, a cold light in his eyes. “Still, I don’t really mind. Even if I lose another one of my clone, I’ll still have my sixteen clones hiding here safe and sound.”

“The Zhu anxu Realm...I imagine that the war will only come here at the

very end. That's going to be quite some time from now. When it comes, I'll slink off to a different Realm."

The two alliances were battling each other, and there was nowhere for the Celestial Immortals to run. He had to have a 'legal' status somewhere. The Crimsonbright Realm was very far away from the Zhuanxu Realm. Given that Youngflame Freak had been very low-key in the Grand Xia, there had only been a very low number of Celestial Immortals who had ever seen him. His clones in the Winterherald world were similarly low-key, and the number of Celestial Immortals who encountered him was similarly low.

Only someone who had previously met him in person before would be able to tell that these were his clones! But clearly, Youngflame Freak hadn't been that unlucky thus far.

He had been hidden for countless years with the false identity of 'Immortal Bloodfiend'. This was a publicly acknowledged persona, and no one suspected that there was a connection between 'Immortal Bloodfiend' and 'Youngflame Freak'. Now that he had joined the Seamless Gate and had been inserted here, he was quite low-key.

Youngflame Freak was very famous, but only had two clones; one public, one hidden.

Immortal Bloodfiend was almost unknown. He had one public clone and fifteen hidden ones for a total of sixteen.

"This storm is supposedly going to be a very dangerous one, but perhaps I'll be able to survive yet again. Hmph, of what use is power? Staying alive is what matters. Ji Ning? I can't be bothered to deal with you. You have already displayed your brilliance and your sharpness...now, let's see if you'll be able to survive the storm." Youngflame Freak munched on his meat and guzzled his wine in a very relaxed manner.

"I'm not going to go too crazy in defending this base. Some of the other bases are much more brash than me; the Winterherald world will go after them first, not me. However, my base isn't a weak one either; the Seamless Gate will have no grounds to blame me. How pleasant." When he thought

about how the other Immortals and Fiendgods were risking their lives, and how many had died in the Realmwar, Youngflame Freak felt even more self-satisfied at how clever he was!

“Staying alive is what really matt-” Youngflame Freak’s face suddenly changed. “An enemy’s attacking? Wait, that doesn’t make sense. There shouldn’t be any attacks against me.” Youngflame Freak immediately flew out, having no time to worry about anything else.

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1. Yu the Great is a quasi-historical Chinese figure who founded the historical Xia Dynasty, considered to be the very first Chinese dynasty.
2. This is the legendary Ruyi Jingu Bang which Sun Wukong used in Journey to the West.
3. In Chinese, ‘Kindwater’ was ‘Zhuanshui’.

Chapter 18: Executing Youngflame Freak

This was a fairly small base, with just a single Celestial Immortal protecting it - Youngflame Freak. It was similar to the Myriad Demons Cavern base which Ning had rescued Mu Northson out of; that place also had just a single Celestial Immortal within it.

This was on purpose. The relative weakness of each base made it easier for them to relocate as necessary, without paying much of a price.

“Who is it?”

There were groups of roving guards within the base, as well as some black-robed figures in the distance. The black-robed figures all had auras at the Loose Immortal or Earth Immortal level. For ordinary Immortal cultivators, a place like this was an absolute devil’s den...but to Ji Ning, this place normally wouldn’t be worth his time at all.

His target was the guardian of this base...Youngflame Freak!

“An enemy has barged in!”

“Attack!”

“It’s a Celestial Immortal.”

“Surround and attack him!”

The base was tightly guarded, and as soon as Ning used a Greater Teleportation to bypass the formations, he was instantly discovered.

“Attack!” The group of black-robed figures instantly set up a great formation, beginning to attack Ning en masse. All of them were Loose Immortals, and some of them were comparable in power to Loose Immortals who had survived for a million years. If they joined forces, they were absolutely capable of battling a Celestial Immortal.

“Unfortunately for you, I’m not a Celestial Immortal,” Ning sighed to himself.

Whoosh. A giant flag appeared in Ning’s hands, brimming with menace. This flag was a transformation of one of the Thirty-Six Heavens created by

the 3600 stargold beads. This Protocosmic spirit-treasure could change form at will, and it possessed tremendous power; Ning enjoyed using it very much.

“Attack!”

“Tie him down! Once Immortal Bloodfiend arrives, he’ll be dead!”

“Right. Immortal Bloodfiend is incredibly powerful; no ordinary Celestial Immortal can match him. Tie him down!” The black-robed figures were all valiant and fearless. They formed together into an enormous black dragon, attempting to tie Ning down for now.

Ning held up the giant flag, pointing the tip of the flagpole towards them.

“Such hollow, meaningless attacks.” Ning stood there in the air, moving lightning-fast as he charged into the base. The flag in his hands swept outwards like an Immortal sword, causing golden light to appear in the skies. As for the black-robed figures who were in formation? Every single one of their chests was pierced straight through.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

As Ning advanced, the flag in his hands stabbed through the chests of nine of the black-robed figures. They were crushed like ants, all nine of them dying on the spot. The great formation was instantly dispersed.

“Who dares to barge into the forbidden grounds?!” An ugly old man charged out with a hideous roar, surrounded by the stench of blood.

“Milord.”

“Milord.”

The surrounding guards felt as though their savior had come. They all called out hurriedly towards him. They had been utterly terrified just now; the only reason they had dared to battle Ning was because they had a formation, but even the formation was useless against him. Faced with such a supremely powerful ‘Celestial Immortal’, they no longer dared to fight back at all.

“Name yourself!” The ugly old man said coldly.

Ning stood there in midair, staring at the ugly old man. He recognized him as Youngflame Freak right away; he had personally seen Youngflame Freak before, after all. Ning laughed coldly, then said angrily, “The Seamless Gate killed my loved ones. Now that my power has increased, I’m going to wipe you all out! If I find one, I’ll kill one; if I find two, I’ll kill a pair. I’ll make the Seamless Gate regret what it did!”

“All by yourself?” The ugly old man snickered. “The Seamless Gate isn’t something the likes of you can offend. I urge you to leave right away. Otherwise...don’t blame me for showing no mercy.”

“Leave? In your dreams!” Ning charged straight towards Youngflame Freak.

In his heart, Youngflame Freak was cursing to himself. “What horrible luck. I actually ran into a madman who wants revenge. The Seamless Gate has harmed countless people throughout the Three Realms; there are far, far too many people with grudges against it. This is a Celestial Immortal who I’ve never even seen before. He must’ve been harmed by the Seamless Gate in the past. Now that he’s broken through to become a Celestial Immortal, he’s gone mad for revenge. There are so many bases in the Winterherald world...why the hell did he have to choose mine? What horrible luck!”

He felt extremely unhappy, but since his foe was already attacking, Youngflame Freak didn’t dare to take him lightly. He produced a blood-colored horsetail whisk in his hand, then swept the whisk forward, transforming it into three thousand blood serpents that surged towards Ning.

Whoosh! The giant flag in Ning’s hands fluttered. The flagpole was still merely as thick as a palm, but suddenly it expanded to become three thousand meters long. It struck out lightning-fast, stabbing straight into Youngflame Freak’s chest with a piercing sound! As for those three thousand blood serpents...how could they possibly stop the might of this ‘Banner of the Heavens’?

“You...you...” Youngflame Freak’s eyes bulged out as he stared towards Ning in disbelief. His heart was filled with utter rage. “He’s close to a Pure Yang True Immortal in power? He absolutely is extremely close to that level. Why is my luck so horrible! A random attacking Celestial Immortal ends up having close to the power of a Pure Yang True Immortal. His treasure is an extraordinary one as well; it has to be a Protocosmic spirit-treasure.”

“What horrible luck.”

“Thank goodness I have many other clones. He shouldn’t be able to find the place where my other clones are hidden.”

Youngflame Freak gave Ning a cold glare, then died.

“Milord!”

“Quick, flee!”

“His lordship is dead!”

Everyone began to panic.

The giant flag in Ning’s hands swept forward. Boom! The Flag of the Heavens contained a world within it, and he immediately dragged all of the servants of the Seamless Gate’s base inside that world. In fact, he even absorbed some of the local palaces and structures into the Flag of the Heavens.

Within the world inside the flag.

“What is this place?”

“Where are we?”

This was an empty world. The Immortal cultivators and Fiendgods of the Seamless Gate were all terrified.

Rumble...

Two vigorous streams of power surged through the skies, forming a pair of enormous millstones above and below them. These two giant millstones began to grind down towards the people between them!

As the spatial millstones began to crush down...

Splat! Splat! Splat!

The servants all perished. Even the Fiendgods were completely slain and destroyed...and one of the bracelets worn by one of the Fiendgods was completely smashed apart. That Fiendgod's other treasures, however, were left unharmed.

"What's going on?!"

One old man after another began to appear. Each of them had different appearances, but their auras were all identical to Youngflame Freak's aura. There was a total of fourteen of them.

Youngflame Freak's fourteen clones stared at their surroundings. Instantly, the looks on their faces changed.

"My fourteen clones have been captured." Youngflame Freak instantly understood...then began to panic. "How is this possible? That Fiendgod was just an ordinary Fiendgod, and his bracelet was just an ordinary Heaven-ranked storage treasure. Generally speaking, powerful Immortals wouldn't deign to act against such puny Fiendgods. Even if they did, they wouldn't go so far as to destroy a Heaven-ranked treasure."

But of course, he had no idea...that Ning knew exactly where he was. Patriarch Subhuti had told Ning long ago. Thus, there was no chance for Youngflame Freak to escape at all.

Boom! The millstones once more came smashing down...and so the fourteen Celestial Immortal clones were all crushed within this supreme Protocosmic spirit-treasure. It must be understood that Ning was using his True Immortal energy in controlling these treasures; even Empyrean Gods and True Immortals would perish if they were trapped within this stargold bead, to say nothing of Youngflame Freak!

The internal crushing power of the Stargold Beads of the Heavens was no lower than the power of the Eight Fires Qiankun World. Most importantly of all, once you entered it, there was no way out. Empyrean Gods might be able to endure the crushing power for a period of time, but

they wouldn't be able to endure it forever.

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The Winterherald world. Within Ironsoldier Hall, one of the three major headquarters of the Seamless Gate.

This was a massive, towering edifice that was completely built using enormous swords, sabers, staffs, and other weapons. It had the appearance of a countless number of weapons plunged deep into the earth, but in reality all of the 'weapons' were parts of a single titanic formation. They were shaped as weapons for cosmetic purposes only.

"Eh?"

"Immortal Bloodfiend suffered an attack."

Within the main hall of Ironsoldier Hall. This was a grand hall that was shaped like an enormous axe. A middle-aged man was solemnly staring at a midair mirror as two other Empyrean Gods and True Immortals hastened over.

"Immortal Bloodfiend suffered an attack. These are the scenes from just now. Take a look." The leader of Ironsoldier Hall, 'True Immortal Ironsoldier', spoke out. His power was significantly stronger than the power of the other two, so he naturally became the temporary leader of the group. However, each headquarters only had a total of three Empyrean Gods or True Immortals, and so there really wasn't much of a difference in status.

"Oh?" The other two consisted of a male golden-armored Empyrean God and a female pink-robed True Immortal. The two appeared to be quite intimate with each other; clearly, they were a couple. They were known as the 'Goldred Couple', and they had a bit of a reputation in the Three Realms. They were fairly average in terms of power, but had a bit of a reputation for a rather unsavory reason. Empyrean God Goldspear had thousands of concubines, while True Immortal Redflower had more than ten thousand male lovers. The two of them really were a perfect pair for each other.

The Goldred Couple stared towards the midair mirror, which was replaying the scenes from earlier.

“The Seamless Gate killed my loved ones. Now that my power has increased, I’m going to wipe you all out! If I find one, I’ll kill one; if I find two, I’ll kill a pair. I’ll make the Seamless Gate regret what it did!” The mirror-Ning’s eyes were filled with madness...and then he immediately attacked Youngflame Freak.

It took only one stance...and Youngflame Freak was wiped out.

He then completely uprooted and destroyed the entire base.

“I’ve never seen this Celestial Immortal before, but he’s quite handsome.” True Immortal Redflower nibbled her lips, an interested look in her eyes.

“Yes, he’s new. He must’ve come out from some backwater place. Most likely, he just broke through from being a Void-level Earth Immortal...but for him to have such power means that he must’ve had some special encounters. That flagpole is particularly powerful; it may well be a Protocosmic spirit-treasure,” Empyrean God Goldspear evaluated. “In short, this is just a person who deeply hates our Seamless Gate, and who was lucky enough to break through to become a Celestial Immortal. He doesn’t really matter. Immortal Bloodfiend can only curse his own terrible luck, for him to have been chosen by this Celestial Immortal.”

“He has close to the power of a Pure Yang True Immortal. Can’t be too overconfident in dealing with him,” True Immortal Ironsoldier said.

“Agreed. Want me to go capture him?” True Immortal Redflower had a greedy look in eyes. She stared at the image of Ning as though she wanted to devour him.

“He’s already left that base. For now, his whereabouts are unknown,” True Immortal Ironsoldier said. “If I use coresense to search for him, I’ll probably disturb the Winterherald Army! Let’s just watch for now. Now that we are on guard, if we notice this Celestial Immortal attacking any of our other bases...Goldspear, you are an Empyrean God. Teleport straight to him and execute him.”

“It’ll only take me a single spear-strike to kill him.” Empyrean God Goldspear laughed in a disdainful manner.

True Immortal Ironsoldier felt resigned. It was his bad luck to have been assigned into a team with these two. Still...this was what his superiors had arranged. There was nothing he could do.

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“How did you find me?!” Youngflame Freak stared in terror at the Celestial Immortal in front of him. Just now, his other fifteen clones had been slaughtered by this Celestial Immortal. He had a total of sixteen clones within this world, with only Immortal Bloodfiend being a public figure; the other fifteen had all been hidden. The fourteen hidden within the magic treasure were all dead...and now, even the last one had been located.”

“Youngflame Freak...you are the reason I am here.” A cold voice rang out.

Chapter 19: Shocking the Three Realms

“Who...who are you?!” Youngflame Freak stared towards the man before him in disbelief.

“It seems you’ve offended many, many people. You aren’t even able to guess at who I am.” Ji Ning stood there, his face and his aura beginning to completely change back to normal. The reason why he had used the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] was so that he wouldn’t rattle the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Seamless Gate, giving him the chance to first execute the sixteen clones of Youngflame Freak!

If he hadn’t hidden his true identity and had gone straight for Youngflame Freak, the Seamless Gate would’ve grown cautious and their Empyrean Gods and True Immortals might have immediately slipped away. If he had gone for them first instead, the Daofathers behind the Seamless Alliance would’ve been alerted, at which point Ning wouldn’t have the time needed to deal with Youngflame Freak.

“Ji...Ji Ning?!” Youngflame Freak couldn’t believe it. He hurriedly said in terror, “Spare me, spare my life!”

He had a total of eighteen clones. Sixteen were hidden here, while the other two were in the Crimsonbright Realm.

The Zhu anxu Realm was fairly safe, but the Seamless Gate had already lost the war for the Crimsonbright Realm. The two clones he had hidden there were in grave danger, but he didn’t dare disobey the Seamless Gate’s orders. As for creating new clones? It must be understood that every single clone of his was an extraordinary one, comparable to his ‘true body’. So long as one survived, he would remain alive.

But in turn, the creation of these clones required a very long period of time. The storm had already descended; he simply didn’t have enough time at all. Thus, once these sixteen were destroyed, only the final two would be remaining. If they died as well, then he would be truly dead.

“So long as you spare me, I can give all of the bugs that I’ve been raising to you. All of them!” Youngflame Freak said frantically. “And Protocosmic

spirit-treasures; I can give them to you as well.”

“Just die.” Ning coldly stabbed out with the flagpole in his hands, and it pierced straight through Youngflame Freak’s chest. The difference in power between the two was simply too great; Youngflame Freak wasn’t able to resist at all.

“No!” Youngflame Freak was filled with terror and rage.

“When you die, your treasures will become mine regardless.” Ning casually ripped the flagpole out of Youngflame Freak’s body...and the soul in that body dispersed.

“Wiping out the sixteen clones of Youngflame Freak is just the appetizer. Soon, I will start preparing for the main course.” Ning’s gaze was cold as he turned to look at the other clones.

His true targets were the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals! They were what really mattered in this war for karmic luck. They were able to command armies of Immortals and Fiendgods, and were able to use incredibly powerful spells and magic treasures. Only when they were the commanders would the armies of Immortals and Fiendgods possess truly shocking levels of power. Without them at the head, those armies would be much weaker. The Three Realms only had so many Empyrean Gods and True Immortals; every single loss would be noticed and felt by the Seamless Gate. If ten were to die...that would be more than enough to cause heartache for the Seamless Gate.

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The Starseizer world. A vast, desolate wilderness.

Ning appeared out of nowhere in midair.

“Respectful greetings to you, Manorlord.” An awe-inspiring sea of Celestial Immortals and Loose Immortals all fell to their knees upon seeing Ning.

“Manorlord.” Empyrean God Redsnow and the rest of the seven all bowed as well.

The reason why Ning had sent Ninefangs back to the Starseizer world was naturally to have the people here get ready for battle. They had made their preparations for war long ago.

“My Starseizing Manor has been hidden for many years now. The Three Realms have long since forgotten our might and our name. As for you... you have lived here within the Starseizing world for countless years. Now... it is time for you to show the Three Realms your fangs!” Ning spoke in an icy voice as he stared at the horde of Immortals.

“Fight!”

“FIGHT!” A heaven-shaking roar rang out from the mouths of the countless Immortals. Their eyes were all blazing with eager fire. They had always known that the Three Realms were just outside, but never had the chance to actually go out. They had been sealed in here for far, far too long. The other Immortals of the Three Realms could rove about, making friends everywhere, but they had to stay here.

Now that Ji Ning had bound the Starseizing Manor, they could leave, yes...but this was a time of war. Which Celestial Immortal would dare to travel about by himself to visit friends? The entire Three Realms had been swept up into a storm of blood, and many of the Immortals had all gathered together into armies.

These Immortals had all been feeling very stifled. But now...they would have the chance to show their power in the Three Realms.

“Assemble the formation!” Ning ordered.

Instantly, with a series of rumbling sounds, the countless Immortals began to fly into the skies. In a very orderly manner, they began to surround the midair Ji Ning. A flood of natural energy surged towards them, quickly coalescing into the form of an enormous Fiendgod. The Starseizing world was a major world, after all, and the amount of natural energy it contained was extremely vast. It was extremely simple for a perfect Heaven Punisher to be formed.

Soon, a Heaven Punisher took shape, with a Seven Planets God next to it. Both were thirty thousand meters tall.

“Redsnow, you go to the second headquarters. I’ll go to the first one,” Ning said. “We’ll handle the third one together.”

“Alright.” The Seven Planets God nodded.

“Let’s go.”

Ning’s Heaven Punisher and the Seven Planets God simultaneously left the Starseizer world.

They were simply too fast. Both of them used a spatial teleport to move towards their destination.

.....

Ironsoldier Hall, one of the three headquarters.

“Come, drink.”

True Immortal Ironsoldier and the Goldred Couple were sipping wine and relaxing within a palace. They were maintaining a constant vigil, however; once they found that crazy Celestial Immortal, Empyrean God Goldspear would immediately attack.

“Come here, my pretty.” Goldspear pulled one of the dancing, singing women into his arms, and the woman laughed as she picked up a cup of wine. “Milord.”

“Come, let’s drink together.” Goldspear drank a cup, then lowered his mouth to kiss the woman, passing the wine into her mouth from his. As for his hands, both of them were already kneading and playing with the woman’s chest. The nearby female Immortal, Redflower, didn’t care at all....because she had two of her male playthings by her side, attending to her needs. Ironsoldier felt rather uncomfortable with this, but since he was a True Immortal, he was able to calmly ignore it all.

They had no idea that Ji Ning had already killed the sixteen clones of Venomflame Freak. Those fifteen hidden clones really had been hidden too well.

BOOM!

Suddenly, a massive explosion could be heard from outside. The entire

Ironsoldier Hall shook violently, and even the palace itself was trembling. Winecups shattered and wine spilled everywhere as the dancers all cried out in shock.

“Not good.”

True Immortal Ironsoldier, Empyrean God Goldspear, and True Immortal Redflower all transformed into streaks of light, charging into the skies above the palace. But upon reaching the outside, they became dazed...because a massive, towering, thirty thousand meter Fiendgod had appeared before them. This Fiendgod had no head, was barefoot, and wielded a pair of massive swords in its hands. The formations in front of him were all gleaming with golden light, but they were all visibly shuddering as well.

“Xingtian the Heaven Punisher?”

“Look at the face on its chest; that’s Ji Ning! Sword Immortal Darknorth, Ji Ning!” The three of them were now stunned. Ji Ning had commanded a Heaven Punisher in the Crimsonbright Realmwar and displayed godlike valor; this story had long ago spread throughout the Three Realms. Ji Ning definitely stood at the very peak of power amongst the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Three Realms. Although the three of them had been assigned to the Zhuanxu Realm, they had read very detailed intelligence reports regarding Ji Ning.

BOOM!

Ning’s Heaven Punisher slashed out with the giant twinswords, and with a boom, the entire formation completely broke apart.

“What?! How can this be!”

“The formation was destroyed?”

All three of them felt terror in their hearts.

“Flee!”

The formation had been meant to protect their headquarters; it would be able to hold out for a period of time even if twenty Empyrean Gods and

True Immortals jointly assaulted it. However, Ning's Heaven Punisher was far more powerful than twenty Empyrean Gods. It was at the Daofather level of power...and in truth, even a Daofather golem had been suppressed by Ning's might.

All Ning had been forced to do was deliver nine successive sword-blows in a short period of time and the formation was completely chopped apart. As soon as the three Seamless Gate experts had charged out and recognized Ning, Ning had finished the job and charged straight towards them.

"Run, run, RUN!" All three of them were completely terrified.

"TOO LATE!" A flood of sword-light swept towards them, many tens of thousands of meters in size, covering the skies and blotting out the sun. In fact, this strike was even more terrifying than the strikes Ning delivered during the Realmwar, because his sword-arts had clearly grown even more exquisite and even faster. The slowest of the three, True Immortal Redflower, saw the sword-light sweep past her body...and her body was instantly transformed into ash. The only thing left behind was the final echoes of an unwilling scream.

"No." True Immortal Ironsoldier hurriedly used an evasive technique, but how could he compare in speed to Ning's weapons? He was slain as well.

At such close range, and faced with such a fast attack...there was no time to use a spatial teleportation technique at all, much less use Greater Teleportation. As for hiding within an estate-treasure? The only result would be that Ning would collect it; it represented certain death. Thus, if they wanted to escape, their only chance lay in fleeing at high speed! When true experts of the Three Realms engaged in battle against each other, they would generally rely on their evasive techniques. Thus, everyone possessed some formidable evasive skills. If they didn't, possessing Protocosmic spirit-treasures that were highly suited for fleeing also worked.

The Xia Emperor, for example, had once commanded a lightship that

allowed him to match the extremely fast speed of the Great Sage Who Swallows the Skies, of the three Diremonster Gods of Mount Dragoneater.

But alas, True Immortal Ironsoldier's evasive techniques were poor, and he didn't have any top-quality Protocosmic spirit-treasures meant for fleeing. Naturally...the only result was death.

"Spare me. Spare me!" Empyrean God Goldspear was utterly terrified. As he begged for mercy, he immediately transformed into nine clones that fled in nine different directions. Although every single clone was fairly weak, if he didn't do this he wouldn't have any chance to escape at all.

Rumble...

The sword-light spun around, causing the tens of thousands of meters around it to become a region of death.

All nine of Empyrean God Goldspear's clones were slain!

Ning swept the area below with his gaze. Instantly, the world itself seemed to shatter as the terrifying, fleeing Celestial Immortals and Loose Immortals were blown into dust.

"Next." Ning's Heaven Punisher turned and used a teleportation technique to head towards the third headquarters.

His own Realmwar had ended more than two years ago. Ning's soul heartforce technique had made some further, minor improvements. Now... he was able to control a hundred percent of the perfect Heaven Punisher's power! He was already very close to reaching maximum power in the past, and now that he had perfect control over it, no energy leaked out of it at all. Thus, he was now able to use the Heaven Punisher to teleport with him, as though it was part of him.

If he didn't have full control over it, there would be no way to teleport with it. He'd have to rely on treasures like the Voidboat in order to travel.

But now...there was no need!

Sneak attacks had to be carried out quickly, with overwhelming force. Thus, Ning immediately used the Heaven Punisher upon attacking!

The first headquarters had been wiped out with incredible speed. The news of its destruction had yet to even reach the third headquarters before Ning arrived. The massive, towering Heaven Punisher stood barefoot upon the desolate wilderness. Raising its twinswords up high, it furiously chopped down upon the palace that was built atop the towering mountain peak. The light of a formation began to flicker and flash as three Empyrean Gods and True Immortals charged out from the palace.

“FLEE!” A voice rang out in the minds of the three.

“It’s the Daofather.” The three instantly understood. The Seamless Gate’s Daofather had finally noticed and was frantically trying to warn them...but alas, it was too late!

BOOOM!!

The formation collapsed. Ning’s overwhelming powerful Heaven Punisher, two giant swords in its hands, began its massacre of the three Seamless Gate experts. The Empyrean God managed to have one of his clones escape, but alas, the other seven clones he created were all destroyed, and the parts of his soul in them were obliterated. He had lost too much of his soul; the remnants of his soul in the seventh clone were unable to survive on their own, and so his soul shattered and he died.

This was a weakness of Empyrean Gods. Although their divine bodies were formidable, once you destroyed their souls, they would die. For example, when Ning acquired the Rahu Bow in the Crescent world, he had encountered the corpse of Empyrean God Qi. Although Qi’s divine body was in perfect shape, his soul had been destroyed.

When one’s soul suffered too much damage, the remaining parts would crumble as well.

“Ji Ning, I’ve wiped out the second headquarters. They almost managed to escape. You moved much faster than me.” The space around Ning turned blurry for a moment as a voice rang out in his mind, then a towering, spear-wielding Fiendgod appeared. It was the Seven Planets God.

“Redsnow, let’s go,” Ning sent back.

As they spoke, a large boat that was three hundred meters long appeared. This was the Protocosmic spirit-treasure, the Voidboat. Ning currently had three top-grade Protocosmic spirit-treasures; this was one meant for escape.

Whoosh! Ning's Heaven Punisher and the Seven Planets God both flew into the Voidboat. Although the Voidboat looked like it was only three hundred meters long, it was like a tiny speck of sand that was capable of holding an entire world within it. It was actually extremely spacious inside; naturally, Ning's Heaven Punisher and the Seven Planets God were able to enter it.

Swish!

They tore a hole through space, and the Voidboat departed from the Winterherald world...heading towards a different majorworld of the Zhuanxu Realm.

Ning wasn't going to let up so easily!

Nine dead Empyrean Gods and True Immortals? Not enough!

.....

"What's going on?"

"What's this all about?"

The Winterherald Army on Winterherald planet had immediately noticed the ripples of power. Their Empyrean Gods and True Immortals were all gathered together, watching the scenes being displayed within the mirror. By the time they noticed it, however, Ning had already started to wipe out the third headquarters.

They saw a massive, nearly naked Fiendgod who was dressed only in a fur loincloth and who wielded two giant swords in his hands. The Fiendgod chopped down against the formations, then completely swept through the headquarters, not letting a single one of the three survive.

"Quick, look at the other two locations," an Empyrean God said.

The images in the mirror quickly transformed to display the other two

headquarters of the Seamless Gate.

Utter annihilation!

Utter devastation!

Both headquarters had been completely destroyed.

“Wiped out?” The commanders of the Winterherald Army stared at each other, stunned. The three headquarters of the Seamless Gate held a total of nine Empyrean Gods and True Immortals, all of whom were hidden behind the protective embrace of formations. They were all wiped out? They had battled these nine Empyrean Gods and True Immortals for countless years!

.....

The major powers of the Three Realms all possessed remarkable abilities. As soon as Ning wiped out the first headquarters, some of them began to take notice.

“What a formidable man, Ji Ning!”

“He really is quite bold.”

“This Ji Ning actually dares to launch sneak attacks by himself, outside of a Realmwar? He really is going all-out against the Seamless Gate.” These major powers all sighed in amazement. They knew very well that launching this sort of merciless sneak attack against the Seamless Gate would utterly incense it!

.....

Within a different major world. This vast world was filled with an endless aura of cold. This was one of the true, major headquarters of the Seamless Gate...the Third World!

The wars against Crimsonbright Realm and certain other realms were conducted by the Fifth World of the Seamless Gate.

As for the Zhuanxu Realm, the even more powerful Third World was responsible for attacking it.

Within the Third World.

“Ji Ning?” At the very peak of a towering mountain that emanated an aura of infinite cold, there was a palace with a man seated in the lotus position within it. The man had long, jade-green hair and jade-green eyebrows. His eyes were open, and they were filled with ice. His coresense had spread out to cover the entire Zhuanxu World. Nine of his Empyrean Gods and True Immortals had perished in such a short period of time...he was now completely enraged and stunned.

Chapter 20: Kill, Kill, Kill!

“He’s courting death!” The skinny, jade-haired elder seated atop the cloud of beds was absolutely stunned and enraged.

Whoosh.

Black energy swirled in the air beneath his cloud, coalescing into the form of a black-robed man. The black-robed man raised his head to look at the skinny elder. “Uncle-master Helljade.”

“Godking.” Daofather Helljade glanced at the black-robed figure below him. He addressed him respectfully as ‘Godking’, as this man was still the nominal leader of the Seamless Gate. Although in power, Daofather Helljade was a bit more powerful than the ‘Godking’, the Godking was the sole heir to their true ‘king’, who every single True Fiend and Daofather of the Seamless Gate venerated.

Naturally, this veneration extended to the ‘Godking’ as well. Normally, Daofather Helljade stood guard over the Third World, but it was still the Godking who was usually in charge of deployments and army movements. In fact, all of the Seamless Gate’s matters throughout the Three Realms were the responsibility of the Godking.

The Fifth World, for example; there was actually a different Daofather who stood guard over it, but at important moments the ‘Godking’ would make the arrangements and deployments. He had learned the techniques of the ‘king’ of the Seamless Gate, the Lord of the Demonheart, allowing him to silently and soundlessly communicate in secret with any living creature of the Three Realms. This made it so that the Nuwa Alliance found it very hard to uncover the deployments and schemes of the Godking.

“Don’t panic. My true body is already beginning to summon our generals.” The Godking chuckled, but his eyes were filled with ice. “No matter what, we aren’t going to let Ji Ning escape again.”

“Right. We absolutely cannot let him escape again,” Daofather Helljade said angrily. “He killed nine of our Empyrean Gods and True Immortals

just now. We've fought with the Zhuanxu Realm for so long, but we had only lost a single True Immortal to date. Now, all of sudden, we've lost this many! This Ji Ning is simply far too brash and wild. He actually dares to sneak attack us? He's looking to die! We have to wipe him out. He cannot be allowed to escape!"

"Agreed." The Godking nodded as well. He, too, felt pain in his heart at what had happened.

They had already lost dozens of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals during their defeat at the Crimsonbright Realmwar. Now, Ji Ning had suddenly struck out of nowhere and wiped out nine more. How could he not feel pain? How could he not feel anger?

"Don't worry. The army is already assembling. Just give me a bit of time, and he'll definitely die." The Godking's voice was filled with a murderous intent.

.....

"Quick, assemble."

"Assemble!"

"Quick!"

The Fifth World held a truly shocking number of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. Once they received the Godking's order, they immediately began to assemble together.

.....

The Skylands major world of the Zhuanxu Realm. There was a towering golden structure in this world within a region surrounded by mountain peaks. It was quite dazzling and eye-catching. This was one of the two major bases of the Seamless Gate on the Skylands world, and it held a total of four Empyrean Gods and True Immortals within it.

"Quick, let's go."

"Withdraw."

The four of them had been relaxing, but upon receiving their orders they

began to panic. One had been training quietly, one had been teaching disciples, and the others had been eating as the Godking's orders had suddenly come.

Space shattered apart, and a three hundred meter boat crashed in through the Void, appearing outside this towering edifice. Two massive Fiendgods appeared simultaneously. The Seven Planets God simply willed it, and the surrounding space became completely sealed and locked. Ning's Heaven Punisher and the Seven Planets God simultaneously struck out with their weapons.

An explosive collision could be heard, as though the heavens themselves had been shattered. In the blink of an eye, the extremely tough and tenacious formations surrounding the structure had been shattered.

Ning and the Seven Planets God simultaneously charged forward.

"Quick, flee!"

"Let's go!"

If they were one step ahead, they would survive. If they were one step behind, their souls would die.

The four Empyrean Gods and True Immortals had received the order to withdraw...but alas, only one of them was able to just barely escape. The other three were slaughtered by Ning and the Seven Planets God.

"Manorlord." The Seven Planets God looked towards Ning.

Ning stared at the rubble before him. His coresense had long ago spread out to cover the entire Skylands world, and he sent mentally to Redsnow, "We're not going to have any more opportunities. We were incredibly fast, tearing straight through the Void to travel from Winterherald to this place, but were just barely able to kill three of them. The other headquarters here on Skylands has already been evacuated. I imagine the other major worlds have been evacuated as well."

"They've spread multiple headquarters across many major worlds. I refuse to believe they'd be willing to withdraw from all of them," the Seven Planets God sent mentally.

“Let’s go to the other major worlds and take a look. Even if we can’t kill many of them, we can destroy their bases.”

It wasn’t easy to build up a headquarters like this. Ning had paid a significant price to set up the grand formations around Swallow Mountain, and the formations that were protecting these Seamless Gate headquarters were powerful enough to receive nine successive strikes from Ning’s Heaven Punisher, which had the power of a Daofather. Every single headquarters had been very expensive to build up.

Whoosh.

The Voidboat flew out from the Skylands world, once more tearing through the Void and hastening to another major world.

.....

“Withdraw.”

“Withdraw.”

“Withdraw.”

The Godking’s true body was sending the orders and redeploying his soldiers. “The six of you, stand guard over Divine Goldlight Mountain. The eight of you, stand guard over the Seamless City...”

Various individuals were being ordered to withdraw, but the Godking was also sending some Empyrean Gods and True Immortals out to gather together at some special locations, such as the Seamless City or some other citadels. Once ten of them hid inside these war-citadels and joined together...even Ji Ning would find it difficult to breach their defenses.

Of course, if they didn’t have any war-forts protecting them, Ji Ning would find it much easier to deal with them. But those war-forts were very hard to breach.

This was why, during the Realmwar against the Crimsonbright Realm, once one side retreated into its war-citadel, the other side would halt its attacks. Both sides understood that unless there was an enormous disparity in power, it would be very hard to breach the defenses of a war-

citadel.

“You guys, go draw Ji Ning’s attention and tie him down.”

“Go draw his attention.”

“Buy some time.”

The Godking’s orders came in rapid succession.

.....

Whoosh!

The Voidboat tore through the Void, arriving at yet another major world.

“There are eight Empyrean Gods and True Immortals hiding within the Seamless City here.” Ning’s heartforce instantly discovered the black, levitating Seamless City. He immediately sent a mental message to the nearby Seven Planets God.

“Hiding inside a Seamless City? Hmph. If they are hiding inside a war-citadel...even if we attack, it’ll be hard for us to break through,” the Seven Planets God sent mentally. “If there were eighteen of them standing guard within a Seamless City, we’d have no chance at all...but there are only eight of them. If we join together, we still have a chance. The Seamless Gate is intentionally giving us false hopes; they want us to attack and waste time here. I imagine that they are currently deploying their armies against us. Soon, their armies will arrive.”

“Agreed.” Ning understood this as well.

“Next world.”

Boom! The Voidboat once more departed, heading towards yet another major world.

In fact, Ning actually decided to leave the entire Zhuanxu Realm and head to a different realm, the Xingtian Realm. Wargod Xingtian, the Heaven Punisher, was a tremendously powerful figure. How could anyone who was proclaimed as a ‘God of War’ during the Primordial Era be weak? And given that he was a member of the Primordial Imperial Clan, the realm under his control was definitely not weaker than the Zhuanxu

Realm at all.

“Damn.”

“Withdraw!”

Ning’s sudden assault against a completely different realm resulted in him reaping the rewards he wanted.

.....

In one realm after another, the forces of the Seamless Gate fell into chaos.

These were all supreme, top-tier realms...and so the entire Seamless Alliance was filled with commotion.

“He’s just running around randomly.”

“Ji Ning really moves quite quickly.”

“Damn him.”

The True Gods and Daofathers of the Seamless Gate were so angry, their teeth hurt. In fact, all of them wanted to personally intervene...but they could sense coresenses of the major powers of the Nuwa Alliance clashing against their own coresenses. The Nuwa Alliance was watching all this happen as well. The major powers of the Seamless Gate could sense the coresenses of terrifying figures such as Lord Tathagata the Buddha, Daoist Three Purities, Subhuti, Fuxi, Sui ren, and others. Instantly, they all calmed down.

All they could do was watch and do their best to redeploy their soldiers.

.....

The Third World.

A total of 289 Emphyrean Gods and True Immortals had all been gathered here.

The black-robed Godking and Daofather Helljade stared downwards at the group of Emphyrean Gods and True Immortals. The Third World was meant to deal with the Zhuanxu Realm and other top-tier Realms.

Monarch Zhuanxu alone had more than six hundred Empyrean Gods and True Immortals under his command, to say nothing of the rest of the Five Monarchs and the other realms. He controlled several times as many experts as Daofather Crimsonbright. This was the difference between a powerful realm and a weak realm.

Empyrean Gods and True Immortals all preferred to follow experts, after all. If you could become a disciple to Daofather Three Purities, why would you choose to become a disciple to Daofather Crimsonbright instead? The strong would naturally grow stronger and the weak would naturally grow weaker. The likes of Lord Buddha, for example, had an entire pile of Daofathers under his command.

The Zhuanxu Realm alone had so many Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. The Third World had to simultaneously deal with the Zhuanxu Realm and multiple other realms; naturally, it had a large number of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. Thus, it didn't take too much time for it to summon 289 of them.

"Join together into the Seamless Infinity Formation. You have to slay Ji Ning," the black-robed Godking ordered.

"Yes," the 289 Empyrean Gods and True Immortals acknowledged in unison.

"Head out!" The Godking gave the order, and the battalion of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals all flew into a black shuttle, then disappeared into the skies.

The Seamless Infinity Formation, when formed by more than two hundred Empyrean Gods and True Immortals, was unfathomably more powerful than the Three Eyed Demon that had been formed by the three Diremonster Gods of Mount Dragoneater. It had the power to battle against even real True Gods or Daofathers! It would indeed be quite easy for it to slay Ning's Heaven Punisher. One or two Empyrean Gods or True Immortals might not be a match for it, but a large number of them would prove to be a terrifying threat.

In any war, a single person by himself was a puny, unremarkable force.

Unless, of course, you had reached Nuwa's level. Even the leaders of the Daoist Path and the Buddhist Sangha had a chance of dying in the war, which was why Subhuti hadn't joined in the first one.

.....

A Voidboat continued to frantically travel from one major world to the next. Ning knew that he was taking on tremendous risks, but his decision to incense and incite the Seamless Gate was always a dangerous one. So he would kill, kill, kill! Kill as many as he could! His heartforce was spread around him in a giant bubble; as soon as something happened, he would immediately flee.

After killing those nine on Winterherald, he had killed six more in his dangerous lightning strikes. Ning, however, wanted to kill even more.

"Hurry, Ji Ning! The Seamless Gate's army has arrived. You need to flee! Subhuti's voice suddenly blasted out within Ning's mind.

"What?!" Ning was shocked.

BOOM!

Far off in the distance, space itself blew apart as a black shuttle suddenly appeared.

When the 289 Empyrean Gods and True Immortals had assembled on the Fifth World, the Godking had personally cast a spell to completely prevent any outside force from scrying on it! Subhuti's [Dream of the Three Worlds] was formidable, but the Godking had been personally been taught by the Lord of the Demonheart, and so his abilities were incredible as well. If he focused on blocking any scrying, he was still capable of preventing Subhuti from detecting what he didn't want them to detect.

Only after the group of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals left the Third World aboard the black shuttle did Subhuti discover them.

He immediately notified Ning...just as the grand army was about to arrive.

BOOM! Subhuti's voice transmission caused Ning to feel shocked, but he

immediately tore into the Void to flee. Thus, just as the Seamless Gate's army appeared, Ning began to flee.

“Chase him!”

BOOM! BOOM! As soon as the Voidboat tore into the Void to escape, the black shuttle also pierced into the Void. They were able to trace the spatial ripples to find out exactly which region Ning's Voidboat was headed towards.

Chapter 21: All For Nothing

This was a world filled with fire, a vast, endless world. In fact, it was a bit vaster than even the Celestial Realm or the Netherworld Kingdom! This world was comparable to a hundred Grand Xia's in size.

This place was a holy land for the human race!

This was a world created by the most powerful and oldest human alive... Suiren.

When Mother Nuwa had created the human race, it had started off very weak. Suiren was alive during those earliest of days. Despite his weakness, he not only learned how to control fire and taught it to his fellows, he also unified the weak human race under his rule and led the humans to a path that permitted their survival during the ancient era where Fiendgods ruled. Suiren was tremendously talented and tremendously steadfast, and he managed to create an inconceivable path for himself and his race.

He was the most exalted, most revered, most supreme emperor of the entire human race...the leader of the Three Emperors!

Suiren was low-key and a down-to-earth person. He often roamed in the primordial chaos, and even cut a canal through it, creating a vast major world in the canal. This world was the Kindlefire major world, and it became a truly sacred land for the human race. One could use the size of a created world to judge the power of its creator, and Suiren's Kindlefire world was second only to Nuwa's world in size.

In terms of power...

Suiren's power was unfathomable. During the Primordial Era, even the Elder God of Fire, Zhurong, a god who lived for battle, admitted that he was not a match for Suiren after sparring against him. Fuxi and Shennong often appeared in the Three Realms, but Suiren always kept to himself in seclusion. His very existence, however, was a mighty sword hanging over the necks of any who dared to cause the human race harm. He was the oldest and most powerful member of the human race. Even if he didn't actually emerge from seclusion, no one in the Three Realms would dare to

forget about him.

Even the Seamless Gate felt great dread towards this almighty human expert. Some powerful Outsiders had run into Suiren in the primordial chaos, and Suiren had slaughtered them all! That scene had stunned the entire Three Realms, and had made the Seamless Gate even more nervous regarding his power.

It was his power that ensured that the human race remained the unquestioned leader of the myriad races. Not even the True Gods of Primordial Chaos would argue against him.

At the very top of a towering, divine mountain of fire, a man was seated in the lotus position, nearly naked and clad only in a fur loincloth. His black hair was spread casually over his shoulders, with every single strand of hair having an aura of inconceivable might, as though they were the horns of a dragon. His face was covered with a thick beard, and his eyes seemed capable of seeing into the future. Although he simply sat there atop the mountain...in truth, his gaze was spread throughout the Three Realms.

He was a transcendental figure that cared about little...but now that the storm had arrived, he was watching over everything.

“Guo Zi.” Suiren’s voice was vigorous and powerful. It was transmitted more than three hundred thousand kilometers away, straight into the ears of a woman who was amongst a crowd of thousands who were quietly training in front of a massive image of a god.

“Father.” The human woman, face covered with divine tattoos, rose to her feet. The tattoos on her face was a relic from back when humans tried out many different types of cultivation methods. Guo Zi was one of the humans who had been willing to try anything, no matter the risk, and Suiren had eventually accepted her as his foster daughter.

“Lead your brigade to go rescue Ji Ning,” Suiren order.

“Yes,” Guo Zi said respectfully.

Suiren, as the oldest Human Emperor, had many, many experts following

him. In the Kindlefir world alone, he had more than ten Daofather subordinates and more than ten thousand Empyrean God and True Immortal subordinates! The number of Celestial Immortals under his command was even more astonishing. This place, a holy land for the human race, could be described as the most powerful of the major worlds. The Seamless Gate didn't even dare to attempt to infiltrate it.

.....

The Voidboat was hurtling forward through the infinite Void. Every so often, it would tear through the Void to travel to another world, then once more begin to fly at high speed.

Aboard the Voidboat.

Ning and the Seven Planets God didn't dare to be the slightest bit overconfident.

"The Seamless Gate's army is very powerful. If we end up trapped, we'll definitely die," the Seven Planets God sent mentally. But suddenly...

"Ji Ning, hold on for just a while longer. Human Emperor Suren has already sent Empyrean Goddess Guo Zi in command of 365 Empyrean Gods and True Immortals to reinforce you." Subhuti's voice rang out within Ning's mind.

"Good." Ning let out a sigh of relief, then turned to glance backwards. The long black shuttle behind him was still chasing at high speed.

"Damn. We were just a fraction too slow." There were nearly three hundred Empyrean Gods and True Immortals gathered aboard the black shuttle. The leader was a tall, skeletal-looking Fiendgod whose flaming eyes stared intently towards the distant Voidboat. "If Ji Ning was just slightly slower just now...our Seamless Infinity Formation would've been able to lock the surrounding space and prevent him from fleeing. It was so close! But now, we can't catch up to him no matter how we try. Damn. Damn!"

"The major powers of the Nuwa Alliance truly are formidable as well. We were quite fast; we tore straight through the Void and into the Three

Realms, but they were still able to discover us and notify Ji Ning. Ji Ning ran quite quickly as well.” A man holding a scimitar in his arms gave his solemn opinion.

“Yes. What a pity.”

“Just one step behind.”

The other Empyrean Gods and True Immortals felt resentful as well.

Fortunately for Ning, Subhuti had warned him, and so he had chosen to enter the Voidboat and flee without hesitating at all! He had been just half a step ahead of them. If it wasn't for that half-step, his foes would've been able to activate their Seamless Infinity Formation and completely lock down the surrounding area for ten thousand kilometers. The power of that formation was enough to ensure that even the Voidboat would find it difficult to tear a path to the Void.

Alas...Ning had been able to escape before their all-encompassing net had been set up.

“Keep chasing.”

“Chase him down, no matter what. If Ji Ning makes even the slightest mistake, we'll be able to catch and trap him,” the skeletal Fiendgod growled. If Ning made some mistakes due to being panicked by this life-threatening situation, he would be caught.

One continued to flee, the other continued to chase.

Through the infinite Void, through the major worlds, through the minor worlds...the pursuit continued. Ning was riding aboard the Voidboat, while his foes were also riding a supreme Protocosmic spirit-treasure, the 'Heavenwitch shuttle'. Both were extremely well-suited for high-speed maneuvers through the Void, and for a time the two were equally matched.

“Not good.” The face of the skeletal Fiendgod aboard the Heavenwitch shuttle changed, along with the faces of his fellows.

A blazing mountain had appeared, hanging in the skies above the vast,

sea-like heavens. The blazing mountain had multiple figures standing on it, each possessing an aura of ancientness. These were all experts who had been alive since the Primordial Era, and the leader was Empyrean Goddess Guo Zi, whose murderous aura filled the heavens. A total of 365 Empyrean gods and True Immortals were by her side.

As for the Voidboat, it flew straight next to the blazing mountain, and as it did two towering Fiendgods came walking out from it.

The two armies stared at each other from afar.

Both consisted of the elites of their respective camps. One side was skilled in the the 'Seamless Infinity Formation' which the Seamless Gate's king had created, while the Nuwa Alliance had its own incredibly powerful 'Sidereal Stargod Formation'. During the Primordial Era, the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals who used this grand formation were similarly able to fight against True Gods and Daofathers.

"Do you wish to battle?" Empyrean Goddess Guo Zi stared at them coldly. Her voice was like ice, but it shook Heaven and Earth.

"Darknorth." The skeletal Fiendgod pointed towards Ning, then said coldly, "Consider yourself lucky this time. You managed to escape by a hair. But your actions...well, you are looking to die."

"Looking to die? Then come here and kill me."

Ning looked back at him, his voice similarly icy. "If you have the ability to kill me, come and do so. I'm right here. What's the point of just making empty threats?"

The skeletal Fiendgod ground his teeth.

Two flames blazed within his eyes as he swept his gaze over the powerful Empyrean Gods and True Immortals standing atop the fiery mountain. All he could do, however, was swallow his resentment. Although Ji Ning was rather reckless in what he did...by holding on for a period of time, he had been able to receive reinforcements from the Nuwa Alliance. The Seamless Gate had not decided to launch the Endwar yet. For now, they were helpless when faced with such a powerful enemy army.

“Withdraw.” The Godking’s voice rang out within the mind of the skeletal Fiendgod.

“Let’s go.” The skeletal Fiendgod had no choice but to give this resentful order.

Boom! The Heavenwitch shuttle tore a hole into the Void, departing from this world.

.....

The Third World. Both the Godking and Daofather Helljade were standing in midair, watching as this unfolded.

“Damn.” The Godking’s eyes flashed with cold light.

“What a pity. We were just one step behind.” Daofather Helljade said in a cold voice, “But that one step meant that we were unable to catch him. This Ji Ning fellow actually has a supreme Protocosmic spirit-treasure, the Voidboat. This Voidboat is a treasure that existed long ago, even before our Seamless Chaosworld had engaged in the first war against the Pangu Chaosworld. It originally belonged to Daoist Threelives. Threelives...he truly was a valiant, courageous warrior. He was extraordinarily brave, and quite willing to be vicious to himself when needed.

“Agreed.” The Godking nodded as well. He, too, remembered the valiant, powerful Daoist Threelives. Although Threelives had never mastered a Heavenly Dao, he was able to rely on his powerful True God body and his utterly terrifying divine ability, the [Starseizing Hand], to slay multiple True Fiends and Daofathers of the Seamless Gate. The power of his [Starseizing Hand] was simply too great.

“Ji Ning has the Voidboat. The only way to kill him is to first seal off spacetime in the area around him or set up a trap for him. The second way is to use an even better flying treasure, but the only ones better than the Voidboat are all Chaos treasures.” The Godking frowned. “Our side only has a single Chaos treasure meant for high-speed flying, but it’s with Daomother Devilhand! Daomother Devilhand is a very solitary figure. She wouldn’t necessarily be willing to hand such an incomparably important Chaos treasure over to a few Empyrean Gods and True Immortals.”

“Yes. Given Devilhand’s temperament, it’ll be hard to make her agree.” Daofather Helljade nodded.

Daomother Devilhand...

She was a truly terrifying fiend who had once unleashed a storm of blood and murder across the Seamless Chaosworld. The countless experts of the Seamless Chaosworld had all been terrified whenever they had heard her name. Her power also came from her hands, but she was different from Daoist Threelives. The reason why Daomother Devilhand’s hands were so powerful was because she had acquired a set of glove-type Chaos treasures in the primordial chaos. She had created a divine ability to go with the gloves, a supreme technique known as the ‘Extinction Devilhands’. Perhaps in terms of fleeing abilities, she was inferior to the Lord of All Fiends, but she wasn’t the slightest bit weaker than him in terms of actual combat power. It had been the Lord of the Demonheart, and him alone, who had been able to subdue this demon amongst demons.

“Ji Ning really is courting death.” The more the Godking thought about what had just happened, the angrier he became. Ji Ning’s slaying of those fifteen Empyrean Gods and True Immortals didn’t have much of an impact on his total combat force, but it had grave implications for his disposition of forces across the entire Three Realms.

If he continued to lay down forces in a spread-out manner as he currently did, Ji Ning would once more succeed in his ambushes. But if he was to change his force layout, then he would have to do so throughout the entire Three Realms. The price of such a change would be enormous!

.....

Ji Ning was currently expressing his thanks to Empyrean Goddess Guo Zi.

“Thankfully, you and your friends came in the nick of time, fellow Daoist Guo Zi. Otherwise, I would’ve been in grave danger.” Ning had already dispersed the Heaven Punisher and allowed his million-plus Immortals to teleport back into the Starseizer world. By his side stood only Redsnow

and the rest of the seven.

“I came to rescue you on orders of Human Emperor Sui ren. If you want to thank someone, thank the Human Emperor.” Empyrean Goddess Guo Zi smiled and nodded towards Ning, and the ancient Empyrean Gods and True Immortals behind her nodded towards him as well. They all treated Ning in quite a friendly manner, because Ning himself was of the human race. These Empyrean Gods and True Immortals had been born in an era when the human race was still young and weak, and so they placed even more importance on solidarity with their fellow humans.

Chapter 22: Negotiations

“However...Ji Ning, your actions are far too risky,” Empyrean Goddess Guo Zi said. “Right now, our two sides are only engaging in small-scale skirmishes against each other. Both sides are still holding back, as no one is willing to expand the scale of the war just yet. Both sides are searching for weaknesses and openings, so as to win the war for karmic luck. Not only are we trying to win, we are also trying to ensure that our Empyrean Gods and True Immortals will survive. The Seamless Gate is trying to do the same thing.”

“Even if we win the war for karmic luck, if all of our Empyrean Gods and True Immortals end up bdying, along with the majority of our True Gods and Daofathers...what’s the point?” Guo Zi looked towards Ning. “Until the final moment arrives, neither side is willing to launch a frenzied, all-out assault. When that final Endwar comes, it will be a massacre on both sides.”

“There is an invisible line which neither side is willing to cross. But you... you’ve crossed that line.” Guo Zi gazed towards Ning. “But of course, that’s just you, and so the Seamless Gate will only act against you and you alone. The further across that line you dare step, the more effort they will put into getting rid of you.”

Ning nodded.

“Still...don’t worry too much. If they begin to deploy their Empyrean Gods and True Immortals in large numbers, we’ll immediately move to stop them, because any actions involving nearly three hundred such experts is an act of war.” Guo Zi continued to look at Ning. “But if they just send small numbers of their most top-tier Empyrean Gods and True Immortals to kill you, there’s no way we can send an army to stop them.”

“You are very powerful, but the Seamless Gate also has some truly astonishing Empyrean Gods and True Immortals on their side.”

Ning nodded. “Fellow Daoist Guo Zi, I understand these things. But since I’ve already chosen to embark on this path, I naturally am prepared for the

consequences.”

Guo Zi no longer tried to dissuade him. She knew that Ning was a powerful Empyrean God and a True Immortal, not a fool. And so she bid farewell and left, along with her forces.

As for Ning, he rode his Voidboat back to Sword Immortal world.

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Sword Immortal world. The mountain peaks of the Five Treasure Peaks still pierced high into the clouds, and things were as quiet as ever.

Ning and the seven Empyrean Gods landed atop the mountains.

“Ji Ning, you can’t ignore what Guo Zi said just now,” Empyrean God Redsnow said worriedly. “Although you are powerful, our Nuwa Alliance alone has multiple figures who are on your level, such as the various divine archers. If any of them are given Daofruit of primordial chaos, they’ll probably be a bit more powerful than even you with your perfect Heaven Punisher. The Seamless Gate has powerful figure as well, and none of them are easy to deal with.”

“If I encounter an army, there’s nothing I can do, but if I encounter just one person, I can still fight back,” Ning said.

“Don’t disregard what she said. There are those who are more powerful than us when they use Chaos treasures or Daofruit,” Redsnow said. Primelight and the rest of the seven looked towards Ning as well.

Ning understood. In truth, both sides had a tacit understanding with each other.

If you are fighting by yourself, then I’ll send a single person to deal with you. Whoever ends up dying can only blame himself for being too weak.

But now, a madman appeared on your side who is ambushing and murdering my subordinates? He’s going too far. I’m going to send my army after him! If this madman halts his actions, I’ll naturally no longer have an excuse to send out an army; only if you employ an army will we do the same.

This came without any negotiations or public declarations, but this was indeed how both sides acted. This was a rule of their war!

If there were no rules at all, then it would be easy for things to rapidly escalate until a point was reached where the Endwar would begin prematurely. Clearly, neither side wished for the Endwar to begin just yet.

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Within the thatched cottage. Ning was seated in the lotus position, waiting patiently.

He had risked his life today. Why? To incite the Seamless Gate.

Rumble...suddenly, a thought-strand descended upon Ning.

“Ji Ning.” An icy voice rang out.

“Finally.” Ning allowed the thought-strand to guide him into the dreamworld. This was exactly what he wanted; to negotiate with the Seamless Gate.

Within the dreamworld of darkness. The towering throne was still hovering within the center of this world, and the black-robed Godking sat upon it, staring down at the figure which had just appeared.

“Ji Ning.” The Godking roared with absolute fury, “You actually dare to rely on your personal power to assault some of the bases of my Seamless Gate? You are the first person in the Nuwa Alliance who dares to do such a thing!”

In truth, there were quite a few Empyrean Gods and True Immortals with deep-seated hatred towards the Seamless Gate. However, Ji Ning was the only one who was actually willing to risk his life in such a manner, and who had the power to carry it out! The formations around those bases were generally capable of withstanding the combined attacks of more than twenty Empyrean Gods and True Immortals for a period of time, after all.

“What do you want?” Ning raised his head to look at the Godking.

The Godking paused, then growled out, “Fifteen Empyrean Gods and True Immortals have died by your hand. If you let matters rest, I can let

bygones be bygones.”

The Godking, in the end, had chosen to swallow his rage. He had to take into consideration his disposition of forces across the entire Three Realms, and he couldn't perpetually be on alert against Ji Ning's ambushes. His only option would be to change his force disposition throughout the entire Three Realms, but that would come at a price. For example, if he withdrew all the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals from the bases and headquarters, there were a number of major worlds that would become impossible to penetrate and infiltrate.

“Let bygones be bygones?” Ning looked at the Godking. “I can let matters rest...but I have a request.”

The Godking was utterly enraged. This child actually dared to make a request? But the Godking still suppressed his anger and said, “Speak!”

“Give senior apprentice-sister Yu Wei back to me,” Ning said.

“Yu Wei?”

The Godking was stunned...and then he began to roar with laughter. His laughter, tinged with fury, shook the entire world of darkness. “So the reason why you've gone so crazy is for Yu Wei. It seems that woman is quite important to you, for you to risk your life in such a way.”

“Yes.” Ning nodded. “I can risk my life for her sake. If you hand her to me, I'll immediately halt. If you don't...I'll keep killing!”

“So you are doing this to extort us, to force our hand?” The Godking's voice was like ice. “Ji Ning, you value yourself too highly. I'm just trying to avoid a bit of unnecessary trouble, which is why I gave you a chance to calm things down with us. But you actually dare to threaten us, the Seamless Gate? You truly are too arrogant. Do you think that just because you succeeded with your first ambush, you'll succeed in a second or a third ambush? Do you really think that our Seamless Gate is unable to deal with a stripling like you?”

Who was the Godking? He was, nominally speaking, the leader of the entire Seamless Gate. He could converse as equals with even the Three

Emperors of Mankind or the leaders of Daoism and Buddhism.

Just now, the Godking had been putting on a charitable, magnanimous air; if Ning halted, he would spare Ning. But now, Ning dared to make requests of him? Fine, then; if the request wasn't excessive, the Godking would agree to it. But Ning had actually carried out these actions to threaten the Seamless Gate, to force them to do something they didn't want to do? That was courting death!

"I only hope for you to return her to me, Godking." Ning looked at the Godking.

"Impossible." The Godking stared back at Ning. "You only have two options before you. To halt and be spared, or to continue and perish. As for Yu Wei...you can forget about her."

Ning stared at the Godking.

The Godking stared back at Ning.

Whoosh. Ning disappeared into thin air.

"He really is courting death." The Godking felt even angrier now. "An Empyrean God actually dares to try to threaten and extort the Seamless Gate? What a joke. A joke!"

The Seamless Gate's original incarnation was that of the Seamless Chaosworld, a world on par with the Pangu Chaosworld. How could a power like this allow itself to be extorted?

.....

Ning sat there by himself within the thatched cottage. He sat there for a long, long time.

"Senior apprentice-sister."

"Although the chances are very slim...I will still go and kill them. Kill them until they can no longer bear it." A breathtaking determination could be seen in Ning's eyes. This was a dangerous path, a path which involved repeatedly risking his life...but that was the nature of his decision.

Ning cast the matter to the back of his mind, sending his mind into the

Starseizing Manor.

Within the main palace of the manor was a large pile of treasures. These were the treasures he had acquired during his earlier ambushes. Ning quickly began to bind them to himself. These treasures might not be too useful to him, but they'd be plenty of help to other Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. If he could increase the power of his forces, their chances of success in the future would be slightly greater.

"Pure Yang treasure."

"Pure Yang."

"A Protocosmic spirit-treasure...but it's just a low-grade one of ordinary power. Still, quite interesting."

"Quite a few Pure Yang Immortal pills. Great Firmanent Immortal pills. Poison?" Ning quickly finished sorting through all of the treasures of the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals.

And then, Ning began to bind all of the various treasures left behind by the many slain Celestial Immortals and Loose Immortals. This happened quite quickly, as these were the treasures dropped by the low-level figures he had casually mopped up after killing the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. Their items weren't particularly valuable, with most being at the Immortal-rank at best. Every so often, he would be lucky and encounter a Pure Yang treasure.

"These are the treasures left behind by Youngflame Freak. Hrm...where's the Worldhold Pagoda?"

"Pity. The Worldhold Pagoda isn't with these sixteen clones." Ning still remembered how the Worldhold Pagoda had sent him to the Nihilum Zone. Still, after searching through all the items, he still hadn't been able to find it. Instead, he encountered some bugs and aberrations.

Ning paid no notice to most of Youngflame Freak's treasures, but one treasure did attract his attention.

"What's this?" Ning was startled.

An enormous, pitch-black stone stele was hanging there in midair. The stone stele was emanating a faint aura of might. Although the aura was very weak, it had an exalted quality about it, far more exalted than even the aura which Patriarch Subhuti had.

Whoosh.

Although Ning's true body remained within the thatched cottage, he quickly sent out a strand of divine power to form a body which manifested within the Starseizing Manor. He took a personal, close look at the levitating black stone stele.

Chapter 23: Stone Stele

The enormous black stone stele was 299 meters tall, and it emanated an aura of majesty that was so faint, it could only be sensed from less than 300 meters away. The aura, however, had an exalted quality about it. Ji Ning only saw two enormous, strange characters carved into the face of the stone stele facing him, while the other side was filled with countless strange characters that were clustered as densely as ants.

“These characters...?” Ning examined them carefully. “I’ve never seen these characters before. It seems as though the Three Realms doesn’t have a language like this.”

Ning had never seen them before, but was certain that these were characters from a language, because they were actually quite similar to the characters of the human race. The two enormous characters on the front, in particular...Ning could almost sense what they meant.

“Let me try with coresense first.” Ning willed his coresense to surge forward.

“This...?” Ning stared at the stone stele in surprise. “How can this be? Impossible. Why is it that my coresense sees nothing at all? It’s as though nothing is there.”

“Can it be that this stone stele is covered with a restrictive spell that blocks out coresense?” Ning pondered for a moment. “Let me try with heartforce.”

Heartforce was invisible, undetectable, and extremely formidable.

Instantly, his true body in the outside world sent its powerful heartforce into the underwater estate to cover the stone stele. This caused Ning’s face to truly change, because he discovered...that all his heartforce found nothing whatsoever. It was as though the stone stele didn’t even exist.

“But, but...” Ning stretched his hand out to touch the stone stele. The stone was icy cold, and its surface was very rough. “This stone stele is clearly right in front of me. How can it be that not even heartforce can

detect it?”

“This is an extraordinary item. In fact...it isn’t even of the Three Realms.”

This thought instantly flashed past Ning’s mind.

The two enormous characters engraved on the stone stele...the countless tiny characters on the back of the stele...the unique runes engraved on other parts of it...clearly, someone had created this item! The stone stele’s aura was so powerful that the creator had to at least be on the level of the Buddhist and Daoist leaders. In fact, he might be even more powerful.

For heartforce to be unable to discover the stone stele when one could see it with the naked eye and touch it with the hand...Ning had never, ever heard of such a strange item. Such an item shouldn’t be able to exist within the Three Realms.

Then...

It had to have come from the primordial chaos outside the Three Realms! Ever since the most ancient of days, the unique items found within the primordial chaos were generally referred to as Chaos treasures. They were either used as ingredients for forging treasures, or used as treasures themselves. When used as treasures, they would become far more powerful than Protocosmic spirit-treasures, and so they would be titled ‘Chaos treasures’.

Where and how were Chaos treasures born? Hard to say. The primordial chaos did indeed give birth to Chaos treasures, but the terrifying golems that the ‘Lord of All Things’ had created were definitely no weaker than any Chaos treasure. Thus, the Three Realms had suspected for some time now that some of the more powerful Outsiders were perhaps capable of creating artifacts that rivaled Chaos treasures in might.

“Can this be a Chaos treasure?” A thought flashed through Ning’s mind.

Whoosh!

Instantly, a figure appeared. Ning’s true body descended upon the clone, merging into it. As for the outside world...Ning left a small amount of his divine power there, in the form of yet another clone.

“Neither coresense not heartforce can detect it. That leaves just divine power and Immortal energy” Ning picked up the stone stele, then gently placed it down within the very center of the hall. Previously, he had thought this to simply be a treasure which Youngflame Freak had acquired by luck; he didn’t think it could possibly be particularly powerful. But now, it seemed, this stone stele had a weighty background to it.

Not even coresense or heartforce could detect it. Most likely, the other major powers of the Three Realms didn’t even know that it existed.

“Youngflame Freak. Oh, Youngflame Freak. For a Celestial Immortal like you to have been in possession of a treasure like this...if it wasn’t for the fact that I wanted to gain revenge for my mother and for junior apprentice-brother Northson, I probably wouldn’t have been able to acquire something like this. This should be an item from the primordial chaos...I wonder if it is a Chaos treasure?” Ning felt a certain itchiness in his heart. If this really was a Chaos treasure, this would be a tremendous stroke of luck for him.

But of course, not all items from the primordial chaos were particularly valuable. For example, when first testing out the Heaven Punisher, Ning had been able to shatter apart ‘chaos goldstone’. Shennong located many different medicinal herbs within the primordial chaos, but their value was far, far lower than that of a Chaos treasure.

“Let me try to bind it first.” Ning sat down in the lotus position, placing his hand atop the giant stone stele. The stone stele was nearly 300 meters tall and nearly 30 meters thick. The divine power within Ning’s body instantly flooded into the stone stele.

“Eh? Not a Chaos treasure?” As soon as Ning sent his divine power into it, he realized something was wrong. There was no way to bind this treasure. Ning knew exactly how it felt to bind a treasure, even a Protocosmic one, but when his divine power flooded into this treasure, he found the insides to be empty. There was nothing at all for him to bind.

However, when his divine power flooded into the two massive characters at the front of the stone stele, a ripple of information was transmitted

straight into Ning's mind.

"Seventeen." Ning instantly understood what the enormous characters meant.

"Those two words mean 'seventeen'. What does that mean? Can it mean that there are many of these stone steles, and that this is the seventeenth?" Ning guessed. "Right; there are many other characters at the back."

Swoosh!

Ning's body blurred, then he appeared in the lotus position to one side of the stone stele. He began to pour a large amount of divine power into the stele. As his divine power flooded into it, it quickly began to interact with the countless characters on the other side of the stone stele. As it did, Ning could sense a tremendous, invisible force resisting his own power; clearly, to forcibly scan and understand the information contained within those countless characters was beyond what his capabilities.

"Wait." Ning came to a halt. "The front side only has two characters, whereas the back side has at least a million. Two characters didn't give me much pressure, and I was able to understand them right away, but a million is far more than what I can handle."

The stone stele was nearly three hundred meters tall, and its rear was filled with those tiny, worm-like scribbles. As best as Ning could tell, there was roughly 1.2 million of them.

"Let's start from the top and proceed slowly."

Ning immediately began to attempt to fill up a few characters with his divine power.

"This is so slow." Ning immediately found the process to be quite taxing. Despite that, a good amount of information began to fill Ning's mind.

"[Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods]..." An extremely ancient technique immediately began to be transmitted into Ning's mind. As Ning's divine power filled each character, more and more information regarding this technique entered his mind. Soon, he completely memorized this entire

technique.

“It...it’s actually a cultivation technique.” Ning stared at the stone stele in astonishment. “And this is just a small part of the top.”

The characters on the stone stele were divided into seven major regions. The first region had this technique, the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods].

“What a powerful technique. It actually allows you to divide into eighteen different bodies.” Ning let out a sigh. “Although Fiendgods can divide into many different clones, once the clone dies, the part of the soul within it will die as well. This will result in the soul fragmenting, and when too much of the soul is destroyed, you will die.”

“But this technique...upon mastering the first level, you’ll be able to perfectly divide the soul into eighteen different spawns. Although each spawn will have less than a tenth of the power of the original body, they are all capable of surviving on their own. In addition, if the other seventeen are destroyed, the final spawn will slowly be able to recreate the other spawns.”

“Once you reach the second level of this technique, the eighteen spawns will all have the same level of power as the original body.”

“If you master the third level...the eighteen spawns can merge back into the original body at any point in time, and the original body can also divide into those eighteen spawns. When they merge into the original body, the power of the original body will explosively increase.” Ning sighed in amazement.

If he mastered this technique, it would be as though there were eighteen Ji Ning’s. Even if he chose to use his original body to fight by itself, his power would still exponentially increase.

How monstrous a technique was this?!

“It seems that this is the technique which Youngflame Freak used, and that he was only able to train to the first level of this technique.” Ning immediately understood. “I had thought that he trained in a secret art like the Bloodshadow Incarnation...but it seems he’s actually training in this

unfathomably profound technique.”

The Three Realms had powerful techniques of its own. The Bloodshadow Incarnation, for example, guaranteed that so long a single incarnation remained alive, the others would come back to life as well. However, true experts would rarely use this technique, because the power of each incarnation would drop dramatically; it was better to keep the true body at maximum power instead! Everyone believed that Youngflame Freak had trained in this technique because he was a coward who feared death, but who would’ve thought that he actually was in possession of a technique like this [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods]? The relative weakness of his bodies was only due to the fact that he had merely trained to the first level.

“Where did this technique come from?” Ning let out a sigh of amazement. “Still...it will be very hard to truly master this technique.”

There were detailed notes regarding this technique. It was easy to gain a basic level of skill in the technique and master the first stage, but the second stage was thousands of times more difficult. As for the third stage? It would be easier to ascend to the heavens than to master it. It required both talent and luck.

It must be understood that even Daoist Three Purities was only capable of dividing himself into the Three Pure Ones. As for the Lord Buddha, he only had his five major clones! The second level of this technique immediately allowed for the creation of eighteen clones that were as strong as the original. This...this was absolutely unearthly.

“Let’s see what the second technique holds.”

Ning once more filled the stele with his divine power. Instantly, the information pertaining to the second technique began to leak into his mind.

The second technique was named the [Nine Bug Solutions].

This was an extremely mysterious and marvelous method for cultivating bug-type beasts. Ning now understood why Youngflame Freak had been able to cultivate and rear such powerful bugs. Everyone in the Three Realms thought that Youngflame Freak had received a particular expert’s

legacy, as there were quite a number of experts who specialized in rearing powerful bug-type beasts. Since Youngflame Freak's skills in raising bugs wasn't excessively amazing, no one paid much attention to him.

But what the outside world didn't know was that the issue was that Youngflame Freak was too weak and didn't have access to enough treasures and materials, which was why he didn't have the chance to rear any powerful bugs at all.

"This technique needs an enormous amount of time and effort. It doesn't suit me." Ning immediately gave up on the technique.

"Time for the third technique." Ning slowly began to notice that the further down he read, the more taxing it became, as the resistive force which filled the stele seemed to grow in power. What Ning didn't realize was that Youngflame Freak himself had only been able to acquire parts of the first technique and second technique. He had been completely unable to gain access to any of the other parts.

He was merely a Celestial Immortal, after all.

Youngflame Freak treated this stone stele as his most valued treasure. He cared about it far more than the Worldhold Pagoda, and was extremely careful about it. The reason he had kept it hidden with him in the Winterherald world was because it was a 'safe' place where he was extremely low-key. By contrast, he was still willing to keep the Worldhold Pagoda in the Grand Xia...but who would've thought that Ji Ning would end up acquiring it?

"Every single technique is marvelous." Ning could sense that his divine power was finding it harder and harder to 'read' the meaning of the characters. By the time he reached the fifth technique, he was completely unable to make any more progress.

"Let me try with my Pure Yang energy." Unwilling to give up, Ning immediately tested out his Pure Yang energy, flooding the stone stele with it.

Whoooooosh!

Ning discovered, to his utter amazement, that the Pure Yang energy was clearly much more effective in reading the characters on the stone stele.

“I might just be able to acquire all seven of these techniques.” Ning instantly felt a certain eagerness in his heart. In fact, he had a feeling...that once he learned all seven techniques, he would perhaps know where this stone stele came from.

Chapter 24: The Seven Mighty Techniques

Pure Yang energy was clearly better suited to penetrating these characters on the stone stele. Ji Ning received the complete fifth technique, the sixth technique...the seventh technique...!

Ning's eyes began to turn bloodshot. He was pouring all of his energy and effort into acquiring these techniques, which had completely stunned him. They were simply far too incredible.

Some of these were comparable to the most supreme of techniques the Three Realms had. As for some of the others...they surpassed any techniques of the Three Realms.

The first technique, [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods], had already caused Ning to feel extremely excited.

The second technique, [Nine Bug Solutions], contained unlimited potential. However, since the storm had already arrived, Ning didn't have enough time to meditate on them.

The third technique, [Sin Armaments], was a technique that was very similar to the Fiendgod Rites of Bloodforging. This was a technique that absorbed the hatred and resentment left behind by slain enemies, using them to forge weapons. These weapons were truly terrifying armaments that possessed tremendous power. By comparison, the Rites of Bloodforging was excessively simple and crude in the manner through which it absorbed the negative energy. [Sin Armaments] was thousands of times more profound than the Rites of Bloodforging. It allowed weapons to rise in power far more quickly, and in a more perfect manner. Weapons created through [Sin Armaments] had much greater potential, and could even become Chaos weapons!

The fourth technique, [Jewel Talisman], was a technique to create Dao-talismans. It was extremely complicated. Although Ning had memorized it, he didn't understand it whatsoever; clearly, it was incredibly profound.

The fifth technique, [Qiankun Reversing Gestalt-Formation], was a formation that worked together perfectly with the [Taowu Eighteen

Fiendgods] technique, because this was a technique that required eighteen cultivators whose minds were as one. If one mastered the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] technique then set down this grand formation, an entire Heaven would be created that could be used to trap one's foes. It would be as though they were trapped someone else's a major world! This was a technique that was perfectly suited for defense and for trapping, rather than attacking. However, due to how profound and abstruse it was, it would probably take a very long period of time to master.

The sixth technique, [God of Ghosts], was a technique meant for cultivating and raising ghosts. The soul was the foundation of all life, and the ghosts that were left behind after one died held limitless potential within them. The [God of Ghosts] technique allowed one to constantly strengthen ghosts all the way to the True God level. In fact, there was even a chance to raise ghosts to have the power of an Elder God!

The seventh technique, [Indestructible Body], was a technique that was similar to the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art].

However, compared to the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], this divine ability was even more incredible. The [Indestructible Body] had a total of six stages; Empyrean Gods could only train in the first three, while only True Gods could train in the final three. According to the description of this divine ability, the first three stages alone were comparable to the complete [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], while the final three stages, based on what Ning could tell, would allow the divine body to become comparable to a supreme Protocosmic spirit-treasure.

During the Primordial Era, the various major powers had joined together to develop the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], with the goal of developing a total of twelve cycles. Alas, in the end they were only able to complete nine of them.

This [Indestructible Body] technique, however, had achieved what those major powers had aspired to. But of course, it required an enormous amount of magic treasures. The Ninth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] required an astonishing amount of Great Firmament Immortal pills. As for the [Indestructible Body]? There were few even amongst True

Immortals and Daofathers who could absorb the necessary cost.

Seven mighty techniques, each of which was astonishing. [Sin Armaments] and [Indestructible Body] were specially prepared for Fiendgod Body Refiners; the sinblades would generally be used in close combat, after all.

[Nine Bug Solutions] and [Jewel Talisman] were meant for Ki Refiners to use.

As for the remaining three techniques, both Ki Refiners and Fiendgod Body Refiners could execute them.

“I’ve finally finished.”

Finally, with great difficult, Ning finished reading the characters of the seventh technique. All seven of them were now memorized in his heart.

“What a tremendous stroke of karmic luck. These definitely are not techniques that were created by the major powers of the Three Realms. Many of the described materials don’t even exist in the Three Realms. For example, the [God of Ghosts] is probably completely unusable. The [Indestructible Body] will also be hard to train to a high level, because the treasures described are not present here.” And yet, Ning understood...“Despite all that, these techniques are still incredible.”

“The alien Outsiders in the primordial chaos...they truly are incredible.” Ning let out a sigh.

The alien Outsiders who had arrived in the Three Realms, such as the terrifying Lord of All Things, were capable of doing things like secretly manipulating the Pangu Chaosworld and the Seamless Chaosworld into a collision course. In addition, the Lord of All Things had been able to create golems and Queen Mother armies that were comparable to the full might of the entire Pangu Chaosworld. From this, one could tell how terrifying the alien Outsiders could be.

“Eh?” Ning’s gaze landed upon the divine runes engraved on the edges of the stone stele. “Just now, I only focused on the characters. I wonder what these divine runes hold within them?”

Ning felt a certain excitement in his heart. He had the feeling that the power and aura of the stone stele primarily came from the divine runes. The characters didn't hold any power in them, but the divine runes held tremendous auras of might.

"Go." Ning willed the stone stele to be sent to a side hall within the Starseizing Manor, then sent his Pure Yang energy into it from afar. That way, even if something dangerous happened...given that the Starseizing Manor was a nigh-unbreakable Protocosmic spirit-treasure, he should be able to stay safe.

"It really is hard to fill." His Pure Yang energy slowly filling the divine runes, Ning instantly began to sense a connection to that exalted aura of supremacy, as well as how hard the runes were to penetrate.

"Keep going. Keep going. Just a little more. Just a liiiiittle more..."

Finally...all of the divine runes on the stone stele were completely filled with Ning's Pure Yang energy. Although the characters had been rather tiring, by comparison they weren't that hard. These divine runes had actually caused Ning's vision to go dim; he had used up almost all of his heartforce before just barely being able to succeed.

In the instant when he successfully finished pouring his energy into the runes...

BOOM!

An inconceivable aura of power exploded forth from the stone stele. The divine runes lit up with dazzling golden light, carrying an aura that was so exalted, it was even superior to that of the Dao of the Heavens. As it exploded outwards, it followed the path of Ning's unleashed Pure Yang energy to instantly arrive at Ning himself.

Ning had a feeling that this exalted, mighty aura was something which no one in the Three Realms aside from the legendary Mother Nuwa and Pangu were capable of matching. They, too, were supposedly superior to the Heavenly Daos themselves.

The exalted aura completely surrounded Ning. In the face of its might,

Ning was like an infant, completely unable to fight back.

Swoosh!

The aura of power rapidly flew back into the stone stele, and the golden light covering the countless divine runes slowly dimmed and faded to a normal color. It just stood there like an ordinary stone stele...except Ji Ning had already disappeared from the underwater estate.

“Master!” The giant yellow bear appeared, absolutely frantic.

All he knew was that Ji Ning had been analyzing that stone stele. As for what mysteries the stone stele contained? The bear had no idea. However, upon sensing his master disappear, he had naturally panicked.

“I’m fine.” Ning’s voice rang out within the giant yellow bear’s mind. Now that he had completely bound the manor, he had a true master-servant connection to the giant yellow bear.

.....

A blurry region of chaos, merely a few hundred meters in size.

Ning appeared out of nowhere within this region.

“Where am I?” Ning was extremely puzzled. He could, however, still sense the panicking giant yellow bear outside, and so he hurriedly consoled the bear.

“What’s that...?” Ning saw two figures fly towards him from far away, each of whom had auras of tremendous power. They had swarthy black skin and were many meters tall. Ning immediately grew guarded as he saw them approach.

After arriving, the two figures...simultaneously fell to their knees, then prostrated themselves on the ground. “Respectful greetings to you, Overseer!”

Chapter 25: Tremendous Fortune

Ji Ning looked at the two prostrating figures, his heart clenching. “It seems my blunder has resulted in them believing me to be the ‘Overseer’. I have to be very careful. The first thing I should do is get a sense as to what an ‘Overseer’ does. I can’t let them see through me; that’ll put me in grave danger.” That exalted aura he had sensed earlier told him that he was a very weak figure, compared to the power of the stone stele.

“It seems they are very respectful to me; their status should be lower than mine.” Ning pondered for a moment, then said, “The two of you, report your names.”

“This humble one is Eastcricket.” The taller man was the first to respond respectfully. His voice was low and deep, and seemed quite honest.

“This humble one is Westbat,” the pudgier one said. “The two of us have been awaiting you, Lord Overseer, for three full chaos cycles. Ever since we were created, we’ve been diligently working here at Prisonworld 17. Without you here, Lord Overseer, we’ve been quite nervous and restless. We were worried that something unexpected had happened to this prisonworld.”

Ning’s heart clenched. Three chaos cycles? A ‘chaos cycle’ had to be a unit of time...and from the sound of it, it was a very long period of time.

After being created? Were not they living creatures?

Prisonworld 17? As the ‘Overseer’...was he supposed to be in charge of this prison?

“Has anything unexpected happened in this Prisonworld?” Ning casually followed their line of conversation. He needed to ask as many questions as he could and learn more information from them.

“We were blessed by your good fortune, and so nothing has happened during the past three chaos cycles. It won’t be so easy for the imprisoned criminals to cause any problems!” The pudgy Westbat hurriedly added, “I knew that you have to be busy, milord. The various duties of the

Prisonworld can be left to the two of us for handling. If there really is a major event, we'll immediately notify you. All you need to do is then report it to His Majesty. You can spend your time touring the Prisonworld, or you can quietly train by yourself. If there's anything you need, just inform us."

"Right. Report it to His Majesty..." Ning nodded slowly.

His Majesty?

Of which kingdom? Could it be that this stone stele belonged to a particular nation?

"Tell me about the various matters, great and small, that have occurred during the past three chaos cycles," Ning said.

The tall Eastcricket blinked at Ning, then mused to himself, "How long would it take to describe all the events that occurred over the course of three chaos cycles? How bored is he?"

In contrast, chubby Westbat grew excited. "Milord, allow me. Uh...shall I start from the time when the last Lord Overseer left, or...?"

"Tell me a bit about the previous Lord Overseer, then speak about the past three chaos cycles." Ning wanted to learn more, but he was afraid of exposing himself. Thus, he was very careful with his words. These two jailors seemed to be very respectful to him, but Ning still had a strange feeling about them.

In truth, ever since his Pure Yang energy filled the divine runes, he had gained a strange sort of control over this chaotic region. In fact, he could easily leave it if he chose. And yet...he didn't have any direct control over these two jailors. Clearly, they had to have been produced by this mysterious 'Dominion' and only answered to the dictates of the Dominion. If they were to discover that Ning was a foe, they would probably attack him.

"Ah...well, the previous Lord Overseer would chat with us when he was bored. Now, it could just be that he was bragging for the sake of bragging, but he claimed to be the son of an Elder God, and that the only reason he had been punished to serve as an Overseer for a chaos cycle was because

he had run afoul of the law.” Westbat mused to himself, “I don’t know if he was just bragging or not, but based on my own judgment, I think he was telling the truth.”

“Generally speaking, Overseers are all core members of our Pangaea chaos-kingdom. After all, even though being forced to stay here in solitude for a full chaos cycle is technically a form of punishment, it also allows the offender to learn those seven supreme techniques. In addition, the offender is even allowed to enjoy one of the bottles of chaos nectar which Prisonworld 17 is able to refine from the primordial chaos around us. This is actually a great benefit! Ordinary Immortals would be willing to spend a full chaos cycle in solitude to gain a bottle of chaos nectar or to learn the seven supreme techniques, but they wouldn’t even have a chance!”

“Chaos nectar?” Ning’s eyes lit up.

[Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] was divided into three stages. The first stage was very easy to learn, but the second stage was thousands of times more difficult, because it required one to be able to transform into eighteen mighty clones, each of which was as powerful as the original body. Even the soul had to be identical in power. It was easy to train in divine power or Immortal energy, but to duplicate the soul eighteen times while maintaining the same level of power was incredibly difficult. It required the assistance of precious supportive treasures.

Chaos nectar was incomparably precious. If he had chaos nectar, he would be able to master the second stage of the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods].

“Right. Chaos nectar.” Jailor Westbad said hurriedly, “A bottle of chaos nectar, based on the experiences of the past Lord Overseers, is generally enough to allow mastery of the second stage of the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods].”

“Where is the chaos nectar?” Ning asked.

“The previous Lord Overseer took the chaos nectar back with him to offer it to His Majesty. However, during the past three chaos cycles, PrisonWorld 17 has continued to distill primordial chaos, accumulating

quite a bit. The two of us have been working hard on this task. Given that it's been three chaos cycles since we've been contacted...we have a total of eighteen bottles. The nineteenth bottle isn't full yet; we still need to spend some time and fill it up," Westbat said.

"Give them to me," Ning instructed.

The chubby Jailor Westbat was startled. He hesitated momentarily, then waved his hand.

Whoosh.

Instantly, a total of eighteen black bottles appeared before him, hovering in the air. The ancient surfaces of the bottles were covered with divine runes. They were clearly extraordinary items.

"Milord," Westbat said hurriedly, "Milord, you'll be here for at least a full chaos cycle. You are only permitted to use a single bottle; no matter what, don't use more than that. His Majesty knows exactly how much we are able to harvest. If you use too much, you'll probably run into trouble. Chaos nectar is extremely valuable...generally, we only give it to the Lord Overseer when he finishes his tour of duty."

"Relax. I'm not suicidal," Ning chuckled. He waved his arm, collecting the eighteen bottles.

Westbat hurriedly laughed ingratiatingly. "Right, right, right. You have an exalted status, milord; naturally, you won't act rashly."

"Eheh. Are there any other treasures here in Prisonworld 17?" Ning's eyes seemed to be shining right now.

"Nothing." The chubby Jailor Westbat shook his head repeatedly. He had served quite a few Overseers, and he knew that all of them had special statuses. All of them were core members of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom, which was why they were sent to such an important location as this. Although it was nominally a punishment, it was also a great boon. There were many of them who acquired chaos nectar, then greedily desired other things as well.

"There really is nothing else. This is just a Prisonworld with many

prisoners,” the chubby jailor said. “If you are talented enough to get something out of the prisoners, that’s entirely your business. However, all of the prisoners are filled with hatred, and many of them are incredibly powerful; I imagine that not only will they not give you anything, they’ll try to kill you. If you really want to interact with the prisoners, milord, I urge you to hurry up and master the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods]. That way, with eighteen clones, you at least won’t be at any risk of death.”

“Right.” Ning nodded.

Prisoners?

“Continue telling me about Overseer duties, as well as the various events that have occurred during the past three chaos cycles. I’m actually quite bored right now. Ugh...a full chaos cycle! It’ll feel like forever,” Ning sighed.

“Please permit me to elaborate,” the chubby Jailor Westbat said excitedly. He loved to talk, but Eastcricket was a stuffy gourd who was always silent. This caused Westbat quite a bit of irritation, and he would often go chatting with some of the prisoners. Many of the prisoners wanted to kill him, but fortunately for him he always stayed outside of the protective formations, preventing them from injuring him.

More than half of the prisoners of Prisonworld 17 absolutely hated this chattering, prattering jailor.

“The last Lord Overseer had a rather foul attitude. In my opinion, he had indeed been spoiled rotten by an Elder God. As soon as he arrived...” The chubby Jailor Westbat began to narrate nonstop.

As for Ning, he just smiled and listened in a very ‘relaxed’ way.

Relaxed? He wasn’t relaxed at all! But he knew very well that his acquisition of the stone stele was a stroke of tremendous karmic fortune. The greater a stroke of karmic fortune, the more careful one had to be. Otherwise, one might end up with nothing, or worse!

As Ning continued to listen, he began to understand more and more. An entire world had indeed been placed within this stone stele, and from the

sound of it the world was extremely vast! This was a place where many of the criminals of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom were located.

The Pangaea chaos-kingdom was an extremely powerful kingdom. The most powerful figure was the King of Pangaea, an exceptionally formidable and powerful figure. The stone stele which held this prisonworld had been created by the King of Pangaea, and there were a total of thirty-six of them. The thirty-six stone stele prisonworlds would naturally join together into the shockingly powerful 'Nine-Layered Heaven Chaining Formation', making it incredibly hard for enemies to enter. Only members of their own kingdom could enter.

Each of the thirty-six stone steles had seven mighty techniques engraved upon them, for a total of 252 techniques. These techniques had all been left behind by the King of Pangaea. Although these weren't the supreme techniques which the King of Pangaea had used to dominate his opponents, they were still some of the best techniques he had to offer. Every single Overseer would have the opportunity to learn the seven techniques on their respective stone steles, but they wouldn't be permitted to learn from any of the others.

"Hmm...hmm...Pangaea chaos-kingdom? From its name, it has to be a kingdom located within the primordial chaos," Ning mused to himself. "The primordial chaos truly is an absolutely amazing place. In the past, there have been quite a few incursions by alien Outsiders into our Three Realms. The primordial chaos is vast and infinite, capable of giving birth to many True Gods, Elder Gods, and even figures like Pangu. It makes sense that a nation like the Pangaea chaos-kingdom would exist."

"However...judging from what these jailors said, the 'Nine-Layered Heaven Chaining Formation' which these thirty-six stone steles are a part of is nothing more than a joke."

"This stone stele ended up in Youngflame Freak's hands during the Primordial Era, and now it is in my hands. Its always been by itself for these countless years. I imagine that the formation was long ago destroyed, resulting in the stone steles being scattered apart. I wonder what this stone stele experienced, for it to have ended up here in the Three

Realms.”

Although Ning was surprised and delighted, he was still cautious. The Three Realms had often battled against alien Outsiders such as Rahu or the even-more-powerful Lord of All Things, but had killed all of them. Most likely, many in the Three Realms had acquired some of the treasures or supreme techniques of the alien Outsiders. Ning had merely acquired a single such treasure...albeit, his seemed to be quite impressive.

Ning continued to listen ‘relaxedly’ for some time, then said with a laugh, “Alright, you can stop for now.”

Chapter 26: Training in the Chaos Region

“The two of you can go patrol the prisonworld,” Ji Ning instructed.

“Understood.” The two jailors respectfully assented to the order, then began to fly back the way they came. Far away, there was a blurry spatial door. Upon entering it, the two disappeared from Ning’s senses.

The only person left in this region was Ning.

Ning sat down in the lotus position. Below him was the ‘edges’ of this chaos region. Although it was invisible, it was enough to support Ning.

“Chaos nectar? Distilled from primordial chaos? I’ve never even heard of such a thing in the Three Realms.” Ning waved his hand, producing a black bottle. “A single bottle of chaos nectar is enough to train the second stage of the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods]? But from the sound of it, this chaos nectar is incredibly valuable. Generally speaking, in the Pangaea chaos-kingdom, only Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals are allowed to enjoy this nectar. Aside from them, only some people with special statuses will be occasionally bestowed a bit of it.”

‘Ancestral Immortals’ was a term of power from the Pangaea chaos-kingdom. As far as Ning could tell, it referred to ‘Daofathers’.

The language of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom was incredibly similar to that of the human language of the Three Realms. The words were very similar to each other, and even the pronunciation was similar. Previously, when the torrent of information regarding the seven mighty techniques had entered Ning’s mind, he could hear echoes of a great Dao, allowing him to easily understand their language. In truth, it could even be treated as a mere human dialect of the Three Realms.

“A person assigned to be an Overseer would have to have a high level of status in the Pangaea chaos-kingdom. They would be ‘punished’ to stand guard for a chaos cycle, but would then acquire a bottle.”

Ning now knew exactly how long a chaos cycle was.

The chatty Westbat had spoken for three days and three nights. He had

provided much information, allowing Ning to hypothesize even more.

Chaos cycles...

They referred to the natural cycles every chaosworld would go through. Its birth, the slow passage of time, its eventual aging, and then its final destruction. This extremely long period of time was known as a 'chaos cycle'! But of course, there were some chaosworlds which were attacked and destroyed by outside forces during their prime.

For example, the primordial world of Pangu was a chaosworld that had collided with the Seamless Chaosworld, then experienced a battle that caused its destruction. Still, in the end, the destruction of the Pangu Chaosworld and the Seamless Chaosworld had resulted in the birth of the new world, the 'Three Realms'.

"Prisonworld 17?" Ning glanced at the distant spatial doorway.

He now knew that once he left this region, he would enter Prisonworld 17. This was one of the thirty-six great prisonworlds that were used to hold the prisoners of the ancient Pangaea chaos-kingdom.

"Chaos nectar is extremely valuable and rare; it's hard to say if it even exists anywhere else in the Three Realms. I absolutely cannot waste such a precious treasure." Ning pondered on what to do next. As for the jailor's instructions for him to only use a single bottle, Ning didn't give a damn. Who knew in what corner of the primordial chaos the Pangaea chaos-kingdom was even located? In fact, it might've been destroyed long ago! And of course, Ning himself was merely feigning allegiance to it.

All eighteen bottles would naturally belong to himself!

"According to what the jailor said, all of the Overseers would choose to use their bottle of chaos nectar to train in the second stage of the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods]." Ning nodded. "The Overseers were all core members of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom. They should have known exactly how valuable chaos nectar was. If they chose to use it for this technique, then it should be worth it."

"That'll be my choice as well. First, I'll train in [Taowu Eighteen

Fiendgods].”

Ning’s primary issue was that he knew far too little about chaos nectar. Chaos nectar was gathered by the vast prisonworlds, which had created incomparably complicated formations to harvest it from the primordial chaos. Every single chaos cycle, only a total of six bottles would be harvested! In addition, there wasn’t necessarily anyone in the entire Three Realms who was capable of setting up such a complicated formation. Most likely, only Mother Nuwa, who had established her own Nuwa world, would be able to do so. No matter how Ning looked at it, it seemed as though acquiring more chaos nectar would be extremely difficult.

The chaos nectar of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom would generally go to the King of Pangaea, who would occasionally bestow a bit to his subordinates.

Every single bottle used would represent an irrevocable expenditure. He had to be judicious and sparing in its use. Perhaps in the future, he might discover an important effect or use for it! But of course, the second stage of [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] was absolutely shocking in power. Ning deeply desired to train in it, and so he started to do so immediately.

The blurry chaos region was only a few hundred meters wide.

“Although this region of primordial chaos is very small, it’s extraordinary marvelous.” Ning stared at his surroundings. “Earlier, when I was outside, I couldn’t find anything when I sent my divine power into the stone stele. The stone stele holds this chaos region within it, as well as the prisonworld. I had to activate the divine runes before I was drawn inside.”

“The strangest thing is...”

“It seems as though this place is not under the jurisdiction of the Heavenly Daos.”

By now, Ning was at a formidable level of power. He could vaguely sense how the Heavenly Daos of the Three Realms functioned.

To surpass the jurisdiction of the Heavenly Daos was possible if one

went into the vast Void. Although a Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos was present there, the Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos of the Void was different from that of the Three Realms, even though the 'rules' were the same, as they belonged to different regions. Similarly, the primordial chaos itself held a Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos, as did this stone stele, but the Heavenly Daos of the Three Realms did not have any sway outside the Three Realms or inside the stone stele.

“The stone stele is clearly inside my Starseizing Manor, but it isn't subject to the dictates of the Three Realms. It seems that the major power who created this stone stele is also a figure who has surpassed the Heavenly Daos.”

After coming to this conclusion, Ning no longer thought any further on the matter. Whoosh! A green jade bottle appeared within his hands, with some Pure Yang Immortal pills located inside of it.

“The first stage of [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] is very easy. All I need to do is use up some Pure Yang Immortal pills.” Ning opened the stopper to the green jade bottle, then placed it to one side as he began to train.

Criss-crossing lines of gold began to appear all over Ning's body. Slowly, golden runes began to take form. As more time passed, the golden runes became more and more numerous. In the blink of an eye, a golden rune-covered kasaya seemed to have appeared over Ning's body! A certain aura began to emanate from it.

Rumble...

The many golden runes began to connect to each other in an organized way, linking together into lines that began to ripple and flow. The lines of golden runes thus began to merge into each other in an extremely marvelous way.

A strange, nameless aura began to drift out.

Boom! As time flowed out, the lines of golden runes finally completed their fusion, having transformed into a single, enormous divine rune. This enormous divine rune had completely covered Ning's body...and then, with a swoosh, it went straight inside Ning.

Slowly, a miracle began to happen...

“My truesoul...”

Ning felt a sensation akin to intoxication. Everything felt blurry, but he could still sense that his truesoul was slowly being divided into halves... thirds...quarters...

His soul was beginning to split apart as well. As he felt his body grow low on energy, Ning immediately began to consume some Pure Yang Immortal pills.

This dream-like state persisted for a period of time. Then...whoosh. Seventeen rays of light suddenly shot out from Ning, each of which then transformed into a white-robed youth.

The eighteen white-robed youths all sat there in the lotus position within the chaos region. Their auras were absolutely identical, and their power was the same as well.

“They actually became independent, self-sustaining bodies. Every single one of them has a perfect truesoul and soul. They even have Pure Yang Jindan’s within their body.” Ning was absolutely delighted and shocked. The eighteen clones shared memories together, as they were fundamentally the same person. However, the death of one wouldn’t have any impact on the other seventeen at all.

In addition, thanks to the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods], a slain clone could be remade. However, the cost to remake another soul and another Pure Yang Jindan would be quite large.

This time, Ning hadn’t paid much of a price to train to the first stage. This was because Ning’s true body had essentially had its power divided by eighteen to create those seventeen additional bodies.

“Absolutely identical. Even the divine tattoos are identical.”

The eighteen Ji Ning’s simultaneously stared at their respective palms; each of them had Starseizing Tattoos on their hands.

When Empyrean Gods created clones, their power would only be slightly

affected, and they would still have their divine abilities. The fatal flaw of those clones, however, was that their souls weren't stand-alone. If too many clones died, the soul would be tattered and break apart. Ning, however, didn't have to face this danger...but his power did decrease.

"Time to train the second stage." Ning didn't hesitate at all, immediately pulling out a bottle of chaos nectar.

The eighteen white-robed youths all sat down in the lotus position, forming into an enormous circle with the chaos nectar at the center of the circle.

Drip. Drip. Drip. Droplets of chaos nectar flew out from the black bottle. Although each dropped looked translucent, it was as though they held entire worlds within them. Tiny little bubbles occasionally appeared within each drop, occasionally breaking apart and popping. The little 'worlds' within those bubbles were similarly being born and destroyed.

An inconceivably powerful aura of life emanated from those chaos droplets.

In raw power alone, each drop was perhaps only comparable to a Great Firmament Immortal pill, but the chaos nectar seemed to hold everything within them. Truesoul, soul, heartforce, Immortal energy, divine power...all types of energy seemed to be hidden within them.

The primordial chaos could give birth to worlds. It could create countless living creatures.

Chaos nectar was distilled and extracted from the primordial chaos. It was incomparably marvelous and incomparably valuable.

One drop of chaos nectar after another flew out, moving towards the eighteen white-robed youths. When the chaos nectar entered Ning's body, Ning felt an unprecedented cold sensation fill it. Even his soul itself felt chilled. However, this icy feeling was quite comfortable, and he felt more refreshed and awake than he ever had before. Every part of his body, from his muscles and his flesh to his soul, felt alive and refreshed, as though he had just been bathed.

Ning immediately began to apply the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] technique in guiding the chaos nectar to take affect in the necessary manner.

First the soul, then the Pure Yang Jindan...

They immediately began to grow at high speed, like a sapling growing into a tree. Even Ning's divine power was rapidly increasing...

The auras of all eighteen white-robed youths were strengthening at a shockingly fast pace.

In truth, the first stage of this powerful technique was easy to learn precisely because it involved dividing the power of the true body into eighteen different bodies. The reason why the second stage was thousands of times harder was precisely because it involved using different types of extremely rare items to rebuild the lost power...but finding items that could replenish the soul and heartforce was incredibly difficult.

The third stage not only had high material requirements, it also required a certain level of insight, making it even harder to train. But once one succeeded, the eighteen clones would be able to once more merge together, resulting in a simply shocking increase in power. In truth, there had been many in the Pangaea chaos-kingdom who had acquired this technique, but aside from the King of Pangaea himself, no one had ever been able to train to the third stage.

.....

The chaos region was completely silent.

The bottle of chaos nectar had long ago been used up. At the very bottom of the black bottle, a little bit of remaning chaos nectar could be seen.

"Success." The eighteen white-robed youths simultaneously opened their eyes.

"From this day forth...I finally have the strength I need to truly battle against the Seamless Gate." Ning could finally sense that the terrifying pressure the Seamless Gate had brought him had begun to lessen. Finally,

he had a true chance to rescue his senior apprentice-sister.

Chapter 27: Prisonworld

In terms of value, the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] was comparable to the other six techniques. However, thanks to this bottle of chaos nectar, Ji Ning had been able to train to the second level of the technique, causing his body to undergo a fundamental change in quality.

“There’s actually a bit left over.” Ning waved his hand, causing the black bottle to fly into it. The drops of chaos nectar were clearly visible at the base of the bottle. “Each bottle holds a total of ninety-nine drops. There are actually twenty-two left. According to what Jailor Westbat said, the previous Overseers would all use up nearly an entire bottle. It seems as though my strength is slightly lacking, compared to the previous Overseers.”

The more powerful one was, the more chaos nectar would be needed to train to the second stage of the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods].

The price of training the first stage and creating eighteen clones was having one’s strength lowered. The price of training the second stage lay in consuming chaos nectar to quickly return back to one’s original level of power. Thus, the more powerful one was, the more chaos nectar would be needed. For example, the Jindan and the soul which True Gods and Daofathers possessed were far more powerful than Ning’s, and so they would need far more chaos nectar as well. This, too, had been recorded within the details of the technique.

The generations of Overseers were only permitted to assume their position after showing that they were capable of ‘reading’ the entire stone stele. Ning had just barely succeeded, but had still successfully become an Overseer. This meant his level of power was still quite close to that of the previous Overseers. Clearly, the previous Overseers hadn’t reached the True God or Daofather level.

“Prisonworld...?”

The other seventeen clones remained seated, pondering the remaining six techniques. One of them, however, arose and walked out towards the

spatial gateway.

Whoosh.

Upon passing through the gateway, the world seemed to change.

He was now in a wide, vast world. At the very peak of a ten thousand kilometer mountain, a white-robed youth appeared out of nowhere.

“So this is a prisonworld...?” Ning saw that this vast world was dark and blurry. There were no stars, no sun, no moon. Countless divine runes could be seen swimming through the skies like dragons. These golden divine runes caused the skies to glitter, perpetually casting the vast earth in dim light.

“Spread out.” Standing atop the peak of the towering mountain, Ning willed his heartforce to emerge.

Boom! His heartforce instead spread out in every direction. Ning did not dare to release his coresense in this region, where so many prisoners were located, for fear of suffering an attack! Comparatively speaking, using heartforce was much safer.

In an instant, his heartforce spread out to cover an area that was at least three times the size of the Grand Xia.

.....

“Eh?”

Far away, there was a filthy-looking old man who was leaning against a stone cliff. His legs were shackled together, and the shackles emanated strange, mysterious ripples of power. It was precisely because of these shackles that he had been imprisoned here for more than ten chaos cycles.

“Heartforce...? It seems that the new Overseer has arrived. The Overseers are all young fellows. This one has fairly strong heartforce, at least.” The filthy-looking old man raised his head, a green light emanating from his eyes. Instantly, a surge of powerful heartforce swept out to cover an area of a thousand kilometers. As for the heartforce which Ning had

sent into the region, it was completely surrounded and smothered by this second surge of heartforce.

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Off in the distance, there was a wild dog who was lying on the ground. The wild dog's fur and skin was damaged so badly that his black bones could be seen in some places. The wild dog blinked. "This kid really doesn't know his own limits. That old bastard, Pangaea, is increasingly lax when sending out his Overseers. Doesn't he warn these kids? Still...his heartforce is much stronger than that of the previous Overseer."

Everything within a thousand kilometers suddenly turned dark. Even the surrounding space trembled slightly.

.....

Still atop the distant mountain peak, Ning's face suddenly turned ashen. He gritted his teeth. "Break!"

Instantly, Ning forcibly severed off part of the heartforce which he had sent out. He treated it as though he had shot out an arrow with heartforce, completely severing it from himself.

"How terrifying...b-b-but..."

Only after breaking the connection did the fear hit Ning.

"The region my heartforce was able to cover had to be just a tiny portion of this prisonworld. The most terrifying figures within this region were that old man and that wild dog." Ning swallowed, hard. "That old man had to be at the Daofather level, while the wild dog should be at the Elder God level. That old man's heartforce is merely at the fourth stage as well, but he's far more powerful than me in using techniques to apply it. He was actually able to instantly trap me in an illusion. Fortunately, both of us are at the fourth stage of heartforce, which is why I was able to forcibly sever the connection."

"As for that wild dog...his divine ability is simply incredible. He was able to devour my heartforce in the blink of an eye." 1

Ning instantly understood that those two figures were definitely not people he could mess with.

“The area I scanned also contained eighteen True Gods, thirty-three Pure Yang True Immortals, seventy-one Empyrean Gods, and ninety-six Celestial Immortals.” Ning did some quick calculations.

The auras of the True Gods were as powerful as expected. The Pure Yang True Immortals also gave Ning a sense of tremendous danger.

“The Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals shouldn’t be too dangerous.” Ning pondered for another moment. “Right. I’ll choose a Celestial Immortal as my first contact. Celestial Immortals are the weakest. I should be able to discover quite a few secrets from them.”

The two jailors were nothing more than constructs; they didn’t understand any cultivation techniques at all. The prisoners here, however, did.

Whoosh.

Ning sat down within his Voidboat. The Voidboat transformed into a streak of light, rapidly advancing through the dark prisonworld. Ning intentionally kept more than a thousand kilometers away from the prisoners, because every single prisoner was surrounded by complicated formations that were a thousand kilometers around them. These formations were meant to subdue the prisoners and prevent their techniques from going outside.

There was no way to tear through the space in the prisonworld, nor was there any way to engage in spatial teleportation. The only choice was to slowly fly forward.

It usually took the two jailors more than 120,000 years to complete a full inspection of all the prisoners in the prisonworld. From this, one could tell how vast this world truly was. But of course, this was also a testament to how slow the jailors were. As constructs, they were able to absorb enough energy from the world to stay alive, but their flying speed was ridiculously slow. If they had a Voidboat like Ning did, they would be much, much faster.

Ning flew for half a day.

“Here it is.” Ning put away the Voidboat, then landed within a valley.

“That Celestial Immortal is right up ahead.”

As he walked through the valley, Ning moved hundreds of kilometers with each step. He quickly arrived at the margins of the formation.

The blurry formation barrier covered the region like a giant dome. The prisoner was completely unable to step past the formation barrier. However, the barrier was only effective against the prisoner; Ning and the two jailors could enter and exit as they pleased.

Whoosh. Ning took a single step forward. The barrier didn't harm Ning at all.

Ning once more sent out his heartforce, using it to encompass this region.

.....

Far away, there was a youth dressed in tattered clothes who was seated in the lotus position. The youth had a pair of black shackles around his feet. The chains attached to the black shackles stretched off into the distance, disappearing into an empty region as though they had emerged from it. The black shackles were absolutely terrifying; once they were attached, there was no way to remove them at all. Not even Elder Gods could do it.

Although the black shackles looked like they were attached to the legs, in truth they bound the soul and the truesoul.

Suddenly, faint footsteps could be heard off in the distance.

“Eh?” The youth dressed in tattered clothes blurrily opened his eyes.

It had been far too long. He had been here far, far too long, so long that even the magic treasure clothes he wore had been reduced to a tattered state. In truth, all he had to do was use a bit of energy and he would be able to instantly repair them, but there was no way to absorb any energy whatsoever within the prisonworld. All any of them could do was rely on

the original amount they had to sustain themselves.

He had committed a grave crime, so great that not even his school could save him. His master had given him many spirit-pills, so that he might live longer within this prisonworld. His master had said to him, "Goodhill, I'm unable to save you. Be sparing with these spirit-pills. You'll only be able to survive within the prisonworld by relying on your own Immortal energy, but once it is used up, once the spirit-pills are used up, you will die! Only if you manage to stay alive will you be able to escape. I'll definitely help you and come up with a way to save you, so you have to hold on. No matter what, don't kill yourself. Hold on!"

"Someone's finally come. It's been far, far too long." A look of hope was in the youth's eyes. "Am I going to be released?"

It was this hope which had sustained him for three chaos cycles, which kept him going even now. He had been extremely sparing with every drop of energy, and fortunately his master had provided him with many spirit-pills. However, by now he had already used up the majority of them; most likely, he would only be able to hold on for another chaos cycle, at which point he would succumb.

"Eh?" The youth looked at the white-robed figure. "His aura...True Immortal? Wait...why is he...so weak?"

.....

Ning stared at the skeletal-looking youth. This youth had a human-like appearance, but he was too skinny. Still, Ning's heartforce had discovered that every single prisoner seemed to be extremely gaunt, as though they were ordinary mortals that were starved to the brink of death. No...not even starving mortals would be as ridiculously gaunt as them.

The Elder God in the shape of a wild dog, for example...he had been starved so badly that his very skin had broken apart, revealing his black bones.

"You must be the new Overseer." The youth looked at him. "I am a Celestial Immortal, but an Overseer has actually come to visit me...are you going to release me?"

“Release you?” Ning was startled.

“Why didn’t you bring the talisman of command? Without it, you won’t be able to open these shackles.” The youth shook his head.

Ning shook his own head as well. “I don’t have it. I have no way to release you.” Not even Elder Gods could break these shackles, to say nothing of Ning.

The youth was stunned. He stared at Ning in amazement. “Y-you...you aren’t of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom! Who are you? How did you enter this prisonworld? What happened to the Pangaea chaos-kingdom?”

“I’m the Overseer which His Majesty sent,” Ning said, looking at the youth.

“Don’t deny it.” The youth shook his head. “If you came from our Pangaea chaos-kingdom, if you were sent by His Majesty, then you would definitely know that His Majesty would personally send an Elder God or Ancestral Immortal to open the shackles. Even if you did have the command talisman, you still wouldn’t be able to open the shackles. But just now, when I asked you about opening the shackles with the command talisman, you didn’t express any puzzlement at all.”

Ning was stunned.

He hadn’t revealed anything in front of those two golems...but as soon as he interacted with an actual intelligent being, a Celestial Immortal, he had immediately revealed himself.

Still, Ning didn’t panic at all. When he had first entered, he had been worried about his true identity being revealed, but after chatting with Westbat for so long, Ning realized that this stone stele was a very special treasure, much like his Starseizing Manor. It contained many formations and restrictions within it, but he now truly was the master of the stone stele. As for the two golems, they were nothing more than laborers. Perhaps they weren’t weak, but they would never, ever be able to leave the stone stele.

Ning, however, could leave the stone stele world whenever he so chose.

And so, he was no longer worried about any danger.

“Why did you suspect my identity? Why did you test me?” Ning asked.

“Tell me, what has happened to the Pangaea chaos-kingdom?!” The youth asked frantically.

*

1. This wild dog is likely modeled after the ‘tiangou’, the Heavenly Dog which eats/swallows the sun during an eclipse. The Japanese ‘tengu’ was derived from the Chinese ‘tiangou’.

Chapter 28: Celestial Immortal Goodhill

The youth stared at Ji Ning, his eyes filled with hope.

“It was destroyed,” Ning replied. Even if it wasn’t destroyed, the thirty-six stone steles had been split up. Given how long this one had been within the Three Realms, there was likely no way the Pangaea chaos-kingdom would ever find it again.

“Destroyed? Destroyed. But...how...? Princess...Master...n-no...” The youth finally broke down. He had resolutely stood firm for three full chaos cycles because of that unyielding desire in his heart. Three full chaos cycles! There had been many True Gods who had felt despair due to solitude and killed themselves, but he, a mere Celestial Immortal, had been able to persevere for so many years.

“It was your people. You wiped out our Pangaea chaos-kingdom...you destroyed everything...took everything from me...n-no...” The youth went crazy.

“Go DIEEEEEEEE!” Hundreds of streaks of light suddenly exploded forth from the youth’s body. The streaks of light swirled around him, and then an enormous, jade-green sword-shadow suddenly appeared, chopping down towards Ning.

Ning had been fairly calm, because all of this was as he had expected, and the person before him was merely a Celestial Immortal. Upon seeing the attack, however, Ning was truly stunned. The enormous jade-green sword-shadow carried so much power that his heart clenched. This wasn’t an attack which Celestial Immortals were capable of. In fact, not even every Pure Yang True Immortal was as powerful as this!

“Impossible! [Starseizing Hand]!!!”

Ning didn’t dare to hesitate at all. He immediately executed the [Starseizing Hand] ability.

Whoosh!

An enormous palm, glowing with blurry light, smashed downwards

towards the giant jade-green sword-shadow.

BOOM! The two collided. Shockwaves spread outwards from the collision, causing the earth to tremble and crack.

Ning couldn't help but be knocked several steps backwards by the collision. As for the youth, he still stood there, eyes completely bloodshot as he stared crazily at Ning.

"How can this be? You are merely a Celestial Immortal. How can you be this powerful? This is impossible." Ning was completely stunned. This outcome had completely turned his world upside-down. After using the [Starseizing Hand], he could be considered a supreme Empyrean God. Why, then, was he put at a disadvantage when colliding against that sword?

"Die, die, DIE! GO DIE!!!" The youth had gone completely mad.

"It seems I'll have to suppress him in order to understand what is going on." Ning unleashed his full power. "[Starseizing Hand]!"

The same technique, the [Starseizing Hand]...but this time, Ning's powerful fourth-stage heartforce was completely activated at full power. The power of the [Starseizing Hand] instantly increased once more. Most likely, it was comparable to a full-strength arrow from the divine archers of the Three Realms.

Rumble...

The enormous palm smashed downwards with unearthly powerful. It was markedly and visibly far more powerful than before. When the Celestial Immortal's enormous jade-green sword-shadow chopped against it, there was a sudden explosion, followed by the sword-shadow instantly breaking apart. The giant palm, however, continued to chop downwards. The youth wanted to dodge, but the giant palm made a sudden grabbing motion.

Whoosh! It seized the youth, capturing the youth within itself.

"Fourth stage heartforce?" The youth stared at Ning, laughing like a madman, his laughter tinged with desolate grief. "So what if your

heartforce is at the fourth stage? You are such a weak True Immortal.”

“Speak! How could a Celestial Immortal like you be so powerful?” Ning stared at him.

“Ahahaha...I’m not powerful, you are just puny!” The youth stared at Ning. “I would never have thought that the Pangaea chaos-world would be destroyed and that this prisonworld would end up in the hands of someone as weak as you.”

“Answer me!” Ning’s giant palm clenched around the youth as he said coldly, “How can a Celestial Immortal be as strong as you? Why did you say I am weak?”

“It’s too late...too late. Even if you found out, it’s still too late.” The youth truly seemed gripped by madness as he giggled, “But I still refuse to tell you. Not gonna tell you! Ahahaha...”

Ning frowned. He could sense that this youth truly seemed to have gone crazy.

“If you tell me, not only will I spare you, I can give you what you want,” Ning said.

“What I want? I want to go back to the Pangaea chaos-kingdom. I want to leave this place. I want to see the princess. I want to see Master. Can you do these things? Can you accomplish even one of them?” The youth stared at Ning, madness apparent in his eyes. “Someone as weak as you couldn’t possibly accomplish any of them. You can’t do it!”

Ning was stunned. He didn’t even know where the Pangaea chaos-kingdom was. As for letting the man leave? He didn’t have the ability to do so!

“It’s true that I can’t do it,” Ning said. “However, I can make it so that your life is a bit more comfortable. I can let things be more pleasant for you.”

“Ahahaha...comfortable...ahahahaha! It’s over...over...all over. Master... Princess...I’ve waited bitterly for three full chaos cycles...but this is the result? This is my destiny? Ahahaha...” The insane youth couldn’t stop

laughing. “Master...Princess...Goodhill is on his way now...”

BOOM!

The youth in Ning’s giant palm suddenly blew apart, his soul completely shattering.

“Suicide?” Ning shook his head.

The man had stewed here for three full chaos cycles by himself. It would indeed be hard to persuade such a person with just a few simple words.

.....

Ning stood there, staring at a large pile of items. These were the relics which the young prisoner had left behind.

“I hope I can find something that will tell me about the Pangaea chaos-kingdom, something that can explain why the youth was so powerful.” Ning carefully looked through the items. The first things he noticed were those jade-green flying swords. He saw a total of 360 of them, each of them emanating an invisible aura of sword-intent.

“B-but...” Ning was instantly stunned as he inspected them more carefully. “Top-grade Pure Yang flying swords? All of them are top-grade... and there are 360 of them.” Ning knew very well that the youth had controlled these 360 Pure Yang flying swords to form that jade-green sword-light to fight earlier. “How could he, a Celestial Immortal, possibly be able to simultaneously control so many top-grade Pure Yang swords?”

It was extremely hard to control such powerful treasures. Even most True Immortals would be unable to control so many top-grade Pure Yang swords.

“And inside this...” Ning instantly began to bind some of the storage treasures and investigate their contents. He began to discover one item after another.

The deceased ‘Goodhill’ could be considered a core member of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom. Otherwise, as a Celestial Immortal, there was no way he would even be qualified to be imprisoned here; he would’ve simply

been executed, rather than locked in here for countless years. Clearly, the King of Pangaea had certain concerns of his own; most likely, he didn't want to so directly offend the school behind Goodhill.

And so, Goodhill naturally had quite a few treasures.

"He actually has a second set of 360..." Ning was shocked and delighted. Aside from the first set of 360 jade-green Immortal swords, there was also a second set of 360 fiery-red Immortal swords.

Both sets were of top-grade Pure Yang swords!

These two sets, combined, were better than any of the Pure Yang treasure sets which Daoist Threelives had left behind. But of course, they were still far from being a match for the 3600 goldstar beads, which were supreme Protocosmic spirit-treasures. Every single bead was more valuable than a top-grade Pure Yang sword, and there were 3600 of them. That set was something which Daoist Three Purities had acquired!

"For a Celestial Immortal to have so many treasures...his wealth is far more staggering than that of the vast majority of the True Immortals of our Three Realms. Most likely, only supreme Empyrean Gods and True Immortals like me or Patriarch Lu would be able to compare to him," Ning mused to himself.

He continued to carefully inspect the other items.

Most of the treasures being carried by the youth were Pure Yang treasures. All the items were on the Pure Yang level. It was as though to this youth, Pure Yang treasures were just common items. However, the strange thing was, the youth didn't have so much as a single Protocosmic spirit-treasure on him. It must be understood that even people like the Xia Emperor had multiple Protocosmic spirit-treasures.

"He destroyed all his spirit-pills and Immortal herbs?" Ning looked at some shattered bits and pieces of items, then shook his head. Before dying, the youth had destroyed everything he could. However, he had been unable to destroy the Pure Yang artifacts, and so Ning had acquired them.

"He really didn't want to leave anything nice for me at all. Still, in the

end these Immortal swords became mine. Two sets of flying swords, 360 in each set.” Ning sighed to himself.

What Ning didn’t know was that one of the two sets was the set which Goodhill normally used, while the other set was a backup set.

Aside from the weapons, the other treasures were quite ordinary. For example, the treasures meant for fleeing were all merely at the Pure Yang level; they were far from being a match for the likes of the Voidboat.

.....

After going through Goodhill’s possessions, Ning was unable to find a single cultivation technique or any records of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom.

“It makes sense. Generally speaking, techniques are directly transmitted into the mind. Secret manuals are rarely carried around.” Ning nodded. After he had learned techniques from the Black-White College and the Tristar Crescent Abode of Mount Innerheart, he had either put the secret manuals back where they belonged or destroyed them. There was no way he would just carry them around with him.

This was why it was virtually impossible to acquire techniques like the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], the full [Crimsonbright Diagram of the Nine Heavens], or [Houyi’s Archery] through killing enemies. Ning, for example, simply wouldn’t be carrying those techniques on him. He had memorized them all within his mind.

“Ah, right. All that aside, Celestial Immortals and even Empyrean Gods probably have low status within the Pangaea chaos-kingdom. There’s no way they would be allowed to carry complete techniques around. And generally, when a master teaches an art, various soul-oaths will be employed as well,” Ning mused to himself. The more important a technique was, the more a school would work to ensure it wouldn’t be leaked out. In fact, even soulscouring usually wouldn’t be effective in acquiring a complete technique.

“Still, things might be different for someone with high status.”

“High status individuals might have the ability to acquire some special

techniques, including ones that can be taught to those who are of a different school,” Ning mused to himself.

In the Three Realms, True Gods and Daofathers could choose to teach some techniques to outsiders, if they so desired. In the Pangaea chaos-kingdom, the Elder Gods and Daofathers could probably do the same.

“Earlier, when I used my heartforce to scan the region, I found an Elder God and a Daofather.” Ning nodded slowly. “The Elder God should be more powerful, and he looks like a wild dog. Perhaps it’ll be easier to persuade him.”

Right now, Ning desperately wanted to know why a Celestial Immortal could be so powerful.

.....

After Ning left Goodhill’s prison ‘cell’, he sat back into his Voidboat and fly towards the Elder God that looked like a wild dog.

In truth, Pure Yang treasures were now of limited benefit to Ning, and they were also useless to Daofathers and True Gods. Daofathers and True Gods generally used Protocosmic spirit-treasures or Chaos treasures! Ning’s most powerful treasure set right now was the Stargold Beads of the Heavens, but these two top-grade Pure Yang swords could be used in setting up the [Greater Thousand Swords Formation]. If he gave it to his Primaltwin, his Primaltwin would also have a powerful treasure to use.

The Voidboat carefully flew forward, avoiding the many ‘prison cells’ in the region.

Divine runes continued to flow densely through the dark skies of the world. Their power and aura made it so that Ning’s flying speed was much slower here than it was in the Three Realms.

After flying for more than three days, he finally arrived at the location where the wild dog Elder God was located.

“Senior.” Ning stood outside the formation, but sent a strand of his divine power inside of it in the form of a clone. The clone carried a wooden platter with it, covered with two flagons of wine and fine

delicacies. A fragrance of saliva-inducing meat wafted out from the plate.

“Senior,” Ning’s clone called out, carrying the platter forward into the formation towards the direction of the wild dog Elder God.

Chapter 29: Meeting the Elder God

Even though they were hundreds of kilometers apart, Ji Ning's clone could still see the distant form of the utterly emaciated wild dog lying on the ground. He immediately grew even more courteous and respectful. His heartforce had shown him how formidable this seemingly-unremarkable wild dog was. It had been able to devour even the invisible, formless power of heartforce; how could Ning possibly be a match for it?

"Senior, this junior is the newly-arrived Overseer. There's something I would ask of you, senior," Ning's clone said.

Sniff. Sniff. The wild dog's nostrils flared a few times, and then its eyes opened, revealing a pair of ancient-looking dark-yellow pupils. It opened its mouth.

Rumble...

Everything within a thousand kilometers began to change.

The platter which Ning's clone was holding actually flew into the air and towards that mouth. The fine wine and delicacies on the platter flew with especial speed!

"Eh?" Ning's clone was completely unable to resist this power. "What a formidable divine ability."

As the wine and food reached the wild dog's mouth, they began to shrink in size, then flew straight into it. Even Ning's clone was about to be sucked in!

"Senior! Senior!" Ning's clone called out repeatedly, but the wild dog completely ignored him.

Whoosh.

Ning's clone could sense that he was shrinking in size, while the wild dog before him was growing larger and larger, seemingly as large as the heavens themselves. It flew helplessly into the mouth of the wild dog, then dispersed.

Outside the formation.

“Thank goodness I only sent a clone; all I lost was a bit of my divine power.” Ning stood outside the formation, calling out, “Senior, there’s something I need to ask of you.”

But the wild dog, a few hundred kilometers away, just continued to lie there as though he was asleep.

“And of course, if there is anything you need, senior, I’ll do my best to satisfy you,” Ning said.

“Lucky kid, are you able to release me? Let me out of here?” Finally, an ancient voice rang out by Ning’s ears. The eyelids of the distant wild dog lifted upwards as he glanced at Ning.

“Uh...” Ning immediately asked, “Might I ask, what do I need to do to release you?”

“There are two methods,” the ancient voice said. “The first method is to have an Elder God or an Ancestral Immortal with a talisman of command from the King of Pangaea come here, then activate the talisman to unlock the prison chains. At that point, you as the Overseer can bring me out of this prisonworld, and I will regain my freedom. The second method is to have a mighty individual who has reached the World-level to forcibly shatter these shackles.”

“World-class?” Ning was stunned. “What’s the ‘World-level’?”

The wild dog glanced at Ning, a hint of disappointment in its eyes. Still, it answered Ning’s question. “They are the ones who have ascended beyond the Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals. You look as though you live in a chaosworld. You should have heard rumors that your chaosworld was originally formed from the primordial chaos by a mighty Fiendgod, yes?”

“Yes.” Ning nodded.

“Those who are capable of creating a chaosworld are at the World-level of power. However, those Fiendgods who are born from the primordial chaos at the World-level will all perish upon creating their chaosworld.

They were born for the sole purpose of establishing a world, and there is no way for them to continue living afterwards. As for other Gods or Immortals who manage to train to the World-level after countless years and experiences, they are even more powerful than those Fiendgods who were born at the World-level. Those individuals are capable of destroying these shackles outright. In fact, given enough time, they are even capable of destroying this entire prisonworld.”

Ning now understood.

Pangu!

The World-level was Pangu’s level! Mother Nuwa had reached Pangu’s level as well. No wonder Mother Nuwa had been able to effortlessly dominate the Lord of All Things as soon as she broke through to Pangu’s level! The Lord of All Things had been powerful, and the Seamless Chaosworld had been quite formidable, but Mother Nuwa had immediately slaughtered the Lord of All Things, then frightened the Lord of the Demonheart into merging himself into the Heavenly Daos. As for the Lord of All Fiends, his escaping abilities were quite impressive; he had been able to escape while bringing along many of the shattered remnants of the Seamless Gate’s forces. They had hidden themselves in the primordial chaos, not daring to return until Mother Nuwa left the Three Realms.

Once anyone reached her level, they would be able to effortlessly dominate all comers. The difference in power was like the difference between Heaven and Earth.

“So above the Elder God and Ancestral Immortals are the World-class experts? Then what level has the King of Pangaea reached?” Ning asked.

“He’s also a World-class expert.” The wild dog looked towards Ning. “However, he’s an extremely powerful World-class expert. The Pangaea chaos-kingdom has a total of three World-class experts, which is why it is so powerful. You must understand that it is very, very rare for a chaosworld to give birth to even a single World-class expert.”

Ning nodded.

The Seamless Chaosworld, for instance, hadn't produced a single one. As for the Pangu Chaosworld, only Mother Nuwa had reached that level. Apparently, this was a level of tremendous power, even within the endless primordial chaos.

"Your master, your elders...are any of the experts you know at the World-class?" The wild dog looked at Ning. "They can be World Gods of the Fiendgod path or Chaos Immortals of the Immortal cultivation path; so long as they have reached the World-class, they can forcibly break apart these shackles."

"I know of one." Ning nodded.

"Truly?" The wild dog's eyes lit up with eagerness. Given his incredible level of power, he was completely capable of telling if Ning was telling the truth or not.

"However, I haven't personally met this person yet." Ning looked back at the wild dog.

"I can sense that you aren't lying to me." The wild dog's attitude instantly became noticeably better. Previously, he had been rather indifferent towards Ning, because his experience was that it was incredibly rare for a World-class expert to appear within the primordial chaos. However...now that he knew that Ning's side had a World-class expert behind it, and given that he himself knew that Ning's side wasn't an enemy...suddenly, he saw the light of hope.

Freedom.

He desperately craved it.

The many prisoners jailed here all craved their freedom.

"Senior, tell me more about these 'World-class' experts. My master has met that mighty individual before, but I have not. I know nothing about them. Please tell me a bit more, senior," Ning said. And indeed, Subhuti had met Nuwa before. Ning was telling the truth.

"Your master met this person?" The wild dog's attitude became even better. "Mm. The paths of cultivation are divided into three. The first path

is the Fiendgod path. The primordial chaos will give birth to some living creatures that will title themselves 'Gods', and they will subconsciously choose to call their enemies 'Fiends'. The Fiendgod cultivation path is generally created by these Fiendgods who were born from the primordial chaos, which is why it is named that."

"The second path is the Ki Refining path, which allows ordinary commoners born from the mortal dust to constantly improve themselves and break through to higher levels."

"Finally, there is the invisible, formless path of the heart."

"These three paths are the three major paths of cultivation."

"The Fiendgod path can be divided in the 'mortal', 'Empyrean God', 'True God', 'Elder God', and 'World God' levels. Supposedly, there are even higher levels of power in the primordial chaos, as well as figures who are even more powerful than the King of Pangaea. However, in my sixteen chaos cycles of life, I've never encountered such a powerful figure."

"The Ki Refining path can be divided into the 'mortal', 'Celestial Immortal', 'True Immortal', 'Ancestral Immortal', and 'Chaos Immortal' levels."

"As for the path of the heart...even I do not understand it."

The wild dog continued, "The core of any Ki Refiner lies in the Jindan golden pellet within the body. This is their heart, which contains all of their ineffable might. At the World-class, however, the cultivator shall completely destroy the Jindan region, letting it return to the primordial chaos it sprang from. When that happens, a chaosworld will emerge within the Jindan."

Ning was surprised. The region within the Jindan was extremely vast; all of Ning's magic treasures were placed within it, as was his sea of Immortal energy. To destroy it all and let it return to the primordial chaos, then give birth to a chaosworld...?"

"When that happens, the Chaos Immortal shall have a chaosworld located inside his very body. Naturally, his power will be utterly

indomitable,” the wild god said. “As for the ‘Daos’ which young fellows like you inside the chaosworld train in, these ‘Daos’ are nothing more than the rules by which the chaosworld operates. The ‘natural energy of Heaven and Earth’ which you cultivate is the energy of the chaosworld itself. All you are doing is temporarily borrowing it for your own use.”

“However, to reach the World-level, you’ll have to establish a chaosworld of your own, inside your body. Although the chaosworld within your Jindan wouldn’t be as vast as a real chaosworld in the outside world, you will be the ruler and absolute master of it. Naturally, your power will become enormous. It would be very easy for you to destroy an actual chaosworld.”

Ning nodded. Mother Nuwa did indeed have the power to destroy the Three Realms.

“Because Immortal cultivators at the World-level have established a world region of primordial chaos within their Jindans, they are known as Chaos Immortals.”

“As for Fiendgods, their path involves continually increasing the power of their divine bodies. With each improvement in their body, their power will increase greatly. World Gods possess almost limitless power, and they are capable of establishing chaosworlds of their own. Thus, they are referred to as World Gods.”

“These two paths are equal in power,” the wild dog said.

“Equal?” Ning was suddenly startled. “Senior, are you saying that Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals should be equals? True Gods and True Immortals should be equals? Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals are equals?”

“Of course. Although these are two different paths of cultivation, the two paths are indeed equal in power.” The wild dog nodded.

Ning was stunned. How could the two paths be equal?

True Gods were clearly comparable in power to Daofathers, while Empyrean Gods were on the same level as True Immortals.

“The Ki Refining path is a path that has been slowly developed and tested over countless years, a path that allows ordinary mortals to cultivate and rise in power. Thus, there are many different methods of Ki Refining.” The wild dog stared at the distant Ning. “However, there are three primary methods through which a person can overcome the Celestial Tribulation and become a Celestial Immortal. These three different methods will result in Jindans of different qualities.”

“As for you...you’ve trained in the worst method.” The wild dog shook his head. “Your Jindan is incredibly puny. Even though you are now a ‘True Immortal’, powerful Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals are probably on par with you.”

“Right, right, right! Earlier, I fought against a Celestial Immortal in here. We were indeed on par with each other,” Ning immediately said.

The wild dog shook his head. “The Ki Refining path you people train in is too weak. If your world had a Chaos Immortal within it, things wouldn’t be this bad. I believe the person on your side who broke through to the World-level had to have made the breakthrough as a Fiendgod cultivator. This person must be a World God.”

Ning didn’t deny it. Nuwa had followed in Pangu’s path. She had indeed walked the Fiendgod path.

“There are three different paths for Ki Refiners. Breaking through to become a Celestial Immortal is the most important checkpoint in all of cultivation. The Jindan formed during the breakthrough will determine the power and potential the cultivator will have in the future,” the wild dog said. “The weakest type of Jindan is formed when the cultivator has to laboriously draw in the natural energy, condensing it into a Jindan.”

“A higher level method is to rely on many precious treasures in forming the Jindan, guiding the essence of those treasures to come together through your own personal power. These Jindans are much more powerful.”

“The best method of all is a method which imitates the birth of Fiendgods from the primordial chaos. The bodies of those Fiendgods are

formed from the power of chaos itself. To create the most supreme of Celestial Immortal Jindans, you have to use an entire vast world as your furnace. This world needs to be extremely large, at least on par with this prisonworld. What you need to do is to summon all the limitless power of that vast world, then condense it into a Jindan. This is the best-possible Jindan, and it will contain tremendous power of incredible purity.”

“Of the three methods, the best method is to use the energy of an entire world in order to cultivate the Jindan. The second method is to rely on precious items to help you increase your power. The third method primarily relies on you relying on your own power to draw more in.”

“But of course, there are advantages and disadvantages to everything. The best method requires you to use an entire vast world as your furnace, which is only possible with the assistance of a Chaos Immortal. In addition, when undergoing your tribulation, the power of the Celestial Tribulation will be a bit more powerful than even an Empyrean Tribulation.” The wild dog looked at Ning. “In the Pangaea chaos-kingdom, only a very small percentage of the core members are capable of using the best method to produce a Jindan.”

“As for you...it’s too late. You are already a True Immortal. Your path is set. There’s no way to change it.” The wild dog shook his head.

Chapter 30: Upgrading the Jindan

“My path is set?” Ji Ning refused to accept this. He immediately asked, “I’m a True Immortal right now! My Jindan is still fairly weak. Is there really no way to upgrade it by even a single tier?”

According to the cultivation techniques of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom, True Immortals and True Gods should be on the same level of power! That meant he would be equivalent to a Daofather in the Three Realms!

“It’s useless. Your Jindan is already formed. No matter how much you struggle, your path is already set.” The wild dog’s dark-yellow eyes stared at Ning. “You have the weakest type of Jindan possible. Even though you are a True Immortal, some of the most powerful Celestial Immortals will be stronger than you. Even if you become an Ancestral Immortal, top-tier True Immortals will be comparable to you in strength. You will always be a step behind them.”

Ning gritted his teeth. In the Three Realms, things were different. True Immortals were comparable to Empyrean Gods, while Daofathers were comparable to True Gods.

“But the heavens always leave behind at least a sliver of a chance. There has to be some way!” Ning said.

“Oh, technically there is,” the wild dog said. “However, the Jindan is formed after the tribulation. To upgrade it later...this will be far, far more difficult than even the Celestial Tribulation itself.”

“What method?” Ning immediately asked.

“Special treasures from the primordial chaos,” the wild dog said. “The primordial chaos has given birth to many marvelous things. Certain treasures, when mixed together, can allow the Jindan to be upgraded in quality. However, very few know this method for upgrading the Jindan, and even fewer are able to locate these incredibly rare chaos ingredients. It’ll be almost impossible for you to upgrade your Jindan.”

“And...even if you do manage to scrounge up the necessary chaos

ingredients as well as the upgrade method, you'll at most be able to upgrade your Jindan to the second tier. That's the absolute limit," the wild dog said.

"The second tier?" Ning's eyes lit up.

"The first tier is the tier where True Immortals become equal to True Gods. The second tier will only allow for True Immortals to be comparable to the weakest of True Gods. As for the third tier, your tier...any True God would completely massacre you," the wild dog said.

Ning said delightedly, "The second tier is perfectly fine." To have a foundation comparable to that of a weak True God was enough.

"Perfectly fine? First of all, very few know the Jindan upgrade method. To acquire the necessary chaos ingredients is even more difficult." The wild dog looked at Ning.

"Senior, I wonder if...?" Ning eagerly awaited the response.

"I do indeed know a method for upgrading the Jindan." The wild dog shook his head. "However...I couldn't possibly teach it to you for no reason at all. But of course, if you were able to bring that World-level expert here, I would immediately teach you the Jindan upgrade method."

Ning hurriedly said, "Senior, the stronger I am, the higher my status will be. Only then will I have a chance of meeting that individual."

"I've said everything I need to say. Bring the World-level expert here. If that person doesn't come, then you can forget about bringing anyone else, such as your Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals. There's no point in them coming." The wild dog closed his eyes.

"Senior. Senior..!" Ning repeatedly called out to the wild dog for a long period of time, but the wild dog completely ignored him, acting as though he was asleep.

Ning understood. The wild dog wasn't going to act without an incentive; as the saying went, 'you don't release the hunting hawk until you've seen the hare'.

The only reason this ancient Elder God was even willing to tell Ning so much was because of Mother Nuwa's existence. The Elder God, however, wasn't willing to actually help out Ning at all, unless he was given an incentive to do so.

Half a day later.

"Senior." Ning's clone once more was carrying a wooden platter of food and wine, but this time he was walking towards the filthy-looking old man.

Only now did Ning understand that in the Pangaea chaos-kingdom, Daofathers and Elder Gods were considered to be on the same level. This filthy-looking elder was equal to the wild dog in power...and most importantly of all, he walked the Ki Refiner path! Ning naturally felt tremendous hope.

Thanks to his experiences in conversing with the Elder God, Ning was very careful in his actions. The filthy-looking old man also wanted to leave this place, and he was also capable of telling that Ning was not lying to him. Thus, he told Ning many things. This old man also knew a method for upgrading the Jindan, and he even had two of the chaos ingredients needed to carry it out, although he didn't have all of them.

However...he wasn't willing to give Ning anything at all.

"Senior, would you like for some fine wine or delicacies?"

"Senior, do you need any slaves or servants? Some people to accompany you, serve you, and amuse you?"

Ning knew that there was no way to force it out of him, and so he tried a softer tactic.

"Kid, stop wasting your energy. I have an estate-treasure with me, and inside the estate are a large number of servants and slaves. All sorts of wonderful wine and food are inside the estate, just waiting for when I feel hungry." The filthy-looking old man gave Ning a glance. "I'm an Ancestral Immortal. I'm capable of drawing on the power of primordial chaos to replenish the energy of my treasures. Although this prisonworld has set

up a grand formation to harvest chaos nectar, I'm still able to pull in enough energy to keep myself and my estate-treasure in perfect shape!"

Ning was speechless. The man was carrying servants and slaves with him?

"Don't bother with any other tricks. None of them are able to beguile an Elder God or an Ancestral Immortal. I'll only be willing to help you once you bring that World-level expert over and release me from my captivity," the filthy-looking old man said. And then, he shut his eyes as well, paying no more attention to Ning.

"They really respond to nothing whatsoever. He's just like the wild dog. He won't act without an incentive." Ning sat there on his Voidboat, grinding his teeth in a very discontented fashion. "If I was able to meet with Mother Nuwa, why would I be here? If Mother Nuwa was around, the Seamless Gate wouldn't dare to cause trouble. In fact, the Lord of All Fiends and his Seamless Gate army wouldn't even have dared to return from the primordial chaos."

"Ugh."

This prisonworld had imprisoned quite a few Daofathers and Elder Gods. All of them were shockingly powerful, but none of them were able to do anything to their shackles. Only if their power increased to Pangu's level, the World-level, would they be able to forcibly shatter them.

"What should I do? These experts at the Daofather or Elder God level all have some degree of insight into the Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos. All of them are able to withdraw energy from the primordial chaos." Ning pondered on what to do. The Celestial Immortals present here all had to rely on consuming spirit-pills to stay alive, but the Daofathers did not; the filthy-looking old man, for example, was able to sustain even his estate-treasure!

Most likely, every single Elder God and Ancestral Immortal was still at peak combat power.

"The reason the King of Pangaea keeps Overseers in his prisonworlds is to keep a watch on them. Once an Overseer sees that an Elder God or

Ancestral Immortal is breaking through to the World-level and shattering the manacles, the Overseer is to immediately notify the King.” Ning understood this. Not even the King of Pangaea was able to prevent these Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals from meditating on the Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos.

The Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos was everywhere, after all. But of course, becoming a World-level expert was far too difficult.

Generally speaking, those capable of succeeding would do so within a single chaos cycle. Mother Nuwa, for example, had done so long ago. In truth, these Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals who had already been alive for multiple chaos cycles had almost no chance of succeeding. However, they were very long-lived and very powerful. Even if Ning asked his master Subhuti to come here to help out, Subhuti would have no chance of breaking the manacles...and if Subhuti attempted to kill these people to steal their treasures, he might end up suffering a backlash from it.

“I should take things slow. If things look grim for us when the Endwar begins to approach, I’ll tell Master and the others about this prisonworld.” Ning wasn’t a completely selfless person; this prisonworld was equivalent to an enormous treasury. It was up to him to figure out a method to unlock it and access the treasures within.

The treasures and techniques these Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals possessed were all definitely extraordinary.

However, for now Ning had no ways to access any of them. Even if he summoned Subhuti, Daoist Three Purities, Tathagata, Suiren, and the others to join forces, they would still be taking on an enormous risk. Once these ancient prisoners began to go berserk...

There was no way for Ning to assess exactly how powerful these prisoners. He was, however, certain of one thing; the Pangaea chaos-kingdom was far more powerful than the Three Realms.

.....

Ning rode the Voidboat at high speed for more than four hours before

lowering it to the ground.

He slowly walked forward across the desolate landscape. More than a thousand kilometers from him was a woman, seated in the lotus position.

“Hrm?” The woman’s eyelids twitched, then slowly opened.

“Finally...finally...a living being approaches.” The woman’s eyes lit up. She was far too lonely. It was hard for her to even stay alive here, much less sustain an estate-treasure. Generally speaking, only the Daofather and Elder God prisoners within this prisonworld were able to waste energy on such a thing.

“It’s been a long time since I’ve seen an Overseer.” The woman looked at the distant Ning...but upon seeing him, her face instantly changed.

“A True Immortal?”

“He’s clearly a True Immortal, but...such a weak True Immortal...? The Overseers of Pangaea are all core members of the kingdom. Any True Immortal Overseer should be a supreme, top-tier True Immortal.” Suddenly, a thought entered the woman’s mind. She instantly felt completely stunned.

The white-robed youth walked over, then said in a calm voice, “As you suspected, the chaos-kingdom of Pangaea has been wiped out. You only have two paths before you...to serve me, or to die.”

Chapter 31: Soulscur

The seated woman didn't panic at all. Instead, she began to laugh loudly as she rose to her feet. As she did, her formerly-emaciated figure began to transform. She became full-figured, and her skin became soft and tender. In the time it took for her to rise to her feet, she transformed from a starving beggar to a truly peerless beauty.

"Lilisoft greets you, True Immortal." The woman smiled merrily. "It's been a long time since I've seen an outsider, and three chaos cycles since I've seen an Overseer. I truly feel delighted by your appearance. Most delightful of all is the news that Pangaea has actually been wiped out. Wonderful...ahaha...wonderful!"

Ji Ning stared at the woman. She wasn't going to panic at all?

"Might Lilisoft learn your name or sobriquet, True Immortal?" The woman asked.

"Darknorth." Ning looked at her.

"Darknorth?" The woman nodded slowly. "If you are able to release me, True Immortal, I will submit to you. I'd even be willing to become your servant."

"I'm unable to release you," Ning said.

The woman was slightly startled, but she then nodded. "Right. It is too difficult to open these shackles. Only a Chaos Immortal or a World God can open these shackles without a talisman of command from the King of Pangaea. However...True Immortal, I don't wish to die. Thus, I'm willing to submit to you. I would like to ask, however, that you not place a soul-imprint upon my soul."

Ning actually chuckled. "You agreed quite quickly."

"When the chaos-kingdom of Pangaea existed, the King of Pangaea wouldn't kill me, as he had to worry about other factions and factors. Now that it is destroyed, however...in your eyes, True Immortal, all of us are nothing more than alien prisoners. In a case like this, the only outcomes

are either death or servitude. I don't want to die, so I have to serve," the woman said with a smile.

Ning nodded.

This was much like how things were in the mortal world. Humans and monsters were born enemies. Humans would kill wild beasts and cook them, while wild beasts would attempt to eat humans when possible. Of course, powerful Immortal cultivators and Diremonsters wouldn't fight that much against each other.

In the eyes of those of the Three Realms, no mercy at all could be shown to any alien Outsiders. If they released one, that person might return with other alien Outsiders and wipe out the entire Three Realms! Thus, all of them had to die...unless they could be forced to pledge fealty!

"The soul-imprint...?" The woman looked at Ning. A soul imprint would have a slight impact on her ability to comprehend the Dao, making it even harder for her to progress on her Immortal path.

"There's no need for a soul-imprint." Ning shook his head. "However...I am going to use a soulscour technique on you. You are not to resist." Since there was nowhere for these people to go, there really was no need for him to soul-imprint them.

"Soulscour?" The woman hesitated for a moment. This was equivalent to revealing everything about herself to this man.

"If you are unwilling to comply, then you are of no use to me," Ning said.

The woman gritted her teeth. "Fine. Lilisoft will comply, True Immortal."

Although the True Immortal in front of her was of the weakest tier...if they ended up actually fighting, even if the True Immortal was unable to kill her, he would be able to force her to use up her Immortal energy. Once it was all used up, she'd be finished. By contrast, the True Immortal in front of her was the Overseer; his own energy would be constantly replenished from the side world.

"Excellent." Ning nodded.

Ning felt no pity at all for these alien Outsiders from the primordial chaos. For the sake of his own race...for the sake of his wife and daughter...Ning would show them no mercy, no matter how many he had to kill.

Ning walked into the 'cell'.

Lilisoft shut her eyes. She sighed to herself. "I used an innate beauty spell, but it had no effect on him at all. Alas..." Just now, she had used up her Immortal energy to restore her appearance, then cast an innate beauty spell that enhanced her natural charm. This sort of natural, innate charm and beauty was even more effective than ordinary, coarse 'charm' spells.

But alas, Ning's heartforce was shockingly powerful, having reached the fourth level. It wasn't something which the beauty of a Celestial Immortal like her could possibly shake. In truth...Ning hadn't even noticed that this woman had cast a spell; all he had felt was that this woman truly was surpassingly beautiful. However, ever since he had sent his wife, Yu Wei, into the Infinity Hells...to him, external beauty was nothing more than rouge applied to a skeleton.

Ning reached out, placing his hand upon the top of Lilisoft's head, immediately using a soulscouring technique.

Within her body was a dazzling, enormous golden Jindan. Above the Jindan, there were images of heaven, earth, mountains, rivers, and other things. The aura of the Jindan was incredibly powerful.

"First-tier Jindans truly are formidable. She clearly is just a Celestial Immortal, but her Jindan isn't weaker than my True Immortal Jindan at all." Ning felt absolutely stunned as he sent his coresense into the Jindan. However, he immediately cast that aside as he began his soulscouring.

Her soul had merged into her Jindan, becoming one with it. However, invisible strands of soul energy began to infiltrate her Jindan like dots of starlight, teasing their way into her soul. Fairy Lilisoft would've been able to effortlessly fight back, as she was actually Ning's equal in power; there was no way for Ning to forcibly soulscour her. However, Fairy Lilisoft had already given her. She suppressed her instinctive desire to fight back, not

daring to resist at all, allowing Ning to investigate as he pleased.

Instantly, Ning began to flip through a large amount of memories.

The many things Fairy Lilisoft had experienced after being born...

The vastness and the might of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom...

Everything was laid bare before Ning.

“Oh, these are the cultivation techniques.” Ning finally located information regarding Ki Refining techniques within Fairy Lilisoft’s memories.

“Eh?”

These memories were sealed like bubbles. Ning wanted to go inside them, but the surface of these ‘bubbles’ was covered with many mysterious runes. No matter what Ning tried, he was unable to look inside these memories. All he was able to do was see a few odds bits and pieces from the outside.

“In our Three Realms, people usually swear oaths to the Dao of the Heavens or swear Demonheart Oaths that they will not divulge or reveal the secrets behind certain important techniques. Even if an enemy attempts to soulscour them, the Dao of the Heavens will intervene to prevent it. This technique the Pangaea chaos-kingdom uses, however, is even tighter than that.” There was nothing Ning could do.

The mysterious runes covering these memories were incomparably marvelous and profound. No Celestial Immortal could’ve possibly devised these runes; it had to have been her seniors within her school who had created them.

Ning’s only choice was to give up and to continue viewing her other memories.

He spent a full twelve hours doing so before he finally moved his hand away from Fairy Lilisoft’s hair. She simply had far too many memories, and Ning had wanted to get a detailed understanding of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom, which was why he had spent such a long period of time.

“So that’s how things are.” A smile appeared on Ning’s face. “What an unexpected surprise.” After fully reviewing Fairy Lilisoft’s memories, he understood quite a bit about the Pangaea chaos-kingdom.

Fairy Lilisoft had a very special status. Her grandfather...was the King of Pangaea! The King of Pangaea had three sons, and Fairy Lilisoft’s father was the second. When wandering the world, the second prince had ravished a sacred maiden of a local school, then went on his merry way, completely forgetting about her. Generally speaking, the more powerful one was, the harder it would be for one to conceive. The King of Pangaea, for example, had all three of his children prior to reaching the World-level, and none after.

The second prince had never imagined that this casual rape of his would result in the birth of a daughter. For a ‘sacred maiden’ to grow pregnant and give birth...instantly, countless people cursed her as shameless, and her life became very difficult. Fairy Lilisoft had grown up by her mother’s side. She had watched as her mother was tormented, beaten, and cursed at until her mother finally committed suicide.

This caused Fairy Lilisoft to feel boundless hatred towards this father she had never met.

Some time after this, the King of Pangaea had cast a spell that alerted him to the fact that there was actually a member of his bloodline outside the palace. He found this granddaughter of his, then brought her back.

Fairy Lilisoft’s status had instantly skyrocketed, and she was able to effortlessly destroy the school that had become a nightmarish hell for her mother.

However, she actually felt even more hatred towards her father, the second prince. She had lain in wait like a viper, waiting for her chance. Finally, her chance came, and she sent the completely unprepared prince into the ‘Sea of Infinite Suffering’. Although the King of Pangaea quickly arrived to rescue the second prince, he had still spent a full hour inside the Sea of Infinite Suffering...and as a result, he had gone insane.

The King of Pangaea had been utterly enraged by this. There were very

few members in the imperial clan, however...and so instead of killing her, he had imprisoned her within a prisonworld!

“The King of Pangaea truly is incredible. He was actually able to conquer a total of twelve chaosworlds. In fact, he has actually killed at least three World-level experts!” Ning was secretly amazed.

After a chaosworld was born, it would slowly grow old with the passage of time, then perish. After its destruction, however, a new Fiendgod would be born who would establish a new chaosworld. Thus, the Pangaea chaos-kingdom had actually been commanding a very large region for a very long period of time.

“He was able to kill someone at the level of Pangu and Mother Nuwa. The King of Pangaea is both a Fiendgod and a Ki Refiner. He truly is incredible.” Ning sighed.

In terms of power...the Pangaea chaos-kingdom was far more powerful than the Three Realms.

“However, I didn’t expect that the [Five Treasures] sword-art is actually this incredible.” Ning’s eyes lit up. “There definitely was no way that Daofather Fujū came up with this sword-art. He must’ve found it somewhere.”

Only after searching Fairy Lilisoft’s memories did Ning realize that only those who had reached the World-level could create a technique that surpassed the limits of the Heavenly Daos, with emphasis on the word ‘could’! Not every Chaos Immortal or World God was capable of creating such a technique. Not even Mother Nuwa had been able to do so.

Even the Pangaea chaos-kingdom only had three techniques that surpassed the Heavenly Daos in some way.

The Pangaea chaos-kingdom had a total of three World-level experts, with the King of Pangaea being the most powerful of them. The other two World-level experts, however, hadn’t been able to create any techniques that surpassed the Heavenly Daos. Two of the three had been created by the King of Pangaea, with the third having come from a chaosworld which they had conquered in the past.

Techniques that surpassed the Heavenly Daos...even Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom had to render major merits to the kingdom before they would be bestowed and taught one of the techniques. Celestial Immortals and Empyrean Gods weren't even qualified to learn them at all. As for True Gods and True Immortals? They had to have astonishing talent, have extremely high statuses, and have rendered many contributions to the kingdom before they would be taught one.

Those who were taught one of the three techniques would have to swear 'life-oaths' that they would not teach it to any others.

In the Pangaea chaos-kingdom, the only one with the power to transmit these three major techniques to others was the King of Pangaea himself. All the Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals had sworn life-oaths upon acquiring them.

"In other words...there's no way I could possibly acquire any techniques that surpass the Heavenly Daos in this prisonworld." Ning felt truly stunned. "Daofather Fujū of our Three Realms, however, actually possessed such a technique...something which only a tremendously wise person who was on Mother Nuwa's level of power could devise."

Ning suddenly thought of the fact that before Daofather Fujū had died in the primordial chaos, he had actually arranged for this legacy to be taught to others. It was as though he had known that he would be in great danger.

"Daofather Fujū must've acquired the [Five Treasures] sword-art from somewhere else. However, he didn't want to divulge the location, which is why he claimed he created it," Ning mused to himself.

Chapter 32: Dominating True Gods and True Immortals

Lilisoft stood there, not daring to say a word. She knew that the 'Overseer' before her was thinking.

Finally, Ji Ning looked towards her. "Excellent. I know that you are running out of spirit-pills. This bottle of spirit-pills should be enough for you to stay alive for a period of time." As he spoke, he produce a jade bottle in his hand, filled with Pure Yang spirit-pills. These pills instantly caused Lilisoft's eyes to light up.

"Thank you, True Immortal." Lilisoft was extremely respectful. This was exactly what she needed right now. In truth, Celestial Immortals used up very, very little energy if they focused on staying alive and didn't fight against others. However...they simply couldn't deal with the obscene amount of time they had been imprisoned here. A chaos cycle was an incredibly long period of time, and the total amount of Immortal energy they used up each chaos cycle was quite shocking.

"There's something I would ask you," Ning said.

"Pray tell, True Immortal." Lilisoft was puzzled. The man knew all of her memories; why did he need to 'ask' her anything?

"I trust you can tell that my Jindan is the weakest type of Jindan," Ning said. "I've heard that there are ways to use chaos ingredients and special techniques to transform and upgrade the Jindan to the second tier. This prisonworld currently holds many prisoners. What should I do in order to acquire what I need from them and upgrade my Jindan?"

Although he had seen her memories, her thoughts and her ideas remained her own.

"Do you have any assistants, True Immortal?" Lilisoft looked at Ning.

"I'm by myself," Ning said.

"If that's the case..." Lilisoft pondered for a moment. "The weakest

prisoners here are Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals. The higher level figures are True Gods and True Immortals, while the highest are Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals. The last two are able to draw upon the energy of primordial chaos and are very powerful; I imagine, True Immortal, that you won't be a match for them."

"As for the Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals...they were fairly weak members of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom. No matter how 'special' they were, and even if they do know of methods to upgrade the Jindan, they would've been forced to swear life-oaths to never teach these methods to others. In addition, it's virtually impossible that they might have valuable chaos ingredients on them."

"Thus, only the True Gods and True Immortals are left." Lilisoft looked at Ning. "Only from them might you find the materials that you need, Lord Darknorth."

"Those True Gods and True Immortals generally haven't reached the level of being able to draw upon the energy of primordial chaos, and so they are also forced to rely on using spirit-pills to survive. It's one thing to use spirit-pills to preserve their lifeforce, but quite another to fight in battle." Lilisoft smiled merrily at Ning. "If you continuously attack the True Gods and True Immortals, forcing them to use up their divine power or Immortal energy...no matter how many spirit-pills they have, they won't be able to keep fighting for too long. In the end, they'll end up running out of energy and dying."

"Milord, you can force them to submit to you! Alternately, you can kill them and take their treasures for yourself."

"The treasures which True Gods and True Immortals have are all far superior to the treasures which Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals have." Lilisoft looked at Ning. "The prisonworld is a vast place, and there are many True God and True Immortal prisoners here. Kill them or force them into servitude. If you completely sweep through all of them...I trust, Lord Darknorth, that you'll be able to find what you need."

Ning gave Lilisoft a glance.

What a vicious mind she had. She was merciless, even to members of her fellow race. Although Ning had access to her memories, he truly hadn't come up with an idea like this before.

"Milord, all you need to do is stay outside the formation. You can attack them, but they won't be able to attack you." Lilisoft smiled at Ning. "The only outcome will be their defeat. Either they submit...or they perish."

"I'm far from being a match for True Immortals and True Gods." Ning let out a sigh.

To kill a True God? Or a True Immortal who was equivalent to a Three Realms Daofather?

In the outside world...Ning wouldn't even dare imagine such a thing, given his current level of power. But it would indeed be possible, here within the prisonworld.

"Milord, all you need is patience. Each of the True Gods and True Immortals will be defeated by you, one by one. You'll dominate them and sweep through them, aside from any who might be able to draw upon the energy of primordial chaos," Lilisoft said. "Perhaps there are some with that power in this prisonworld, but they are definitely in the tiniest of minorities, less than one in a hundred."

Ning chuckled. "Very good." He then turned and left.

Time flowed on.

Ning continued to sweep through the Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals, going through six more of them. Two of them, upon learning that the Pangaea chaos-kingdom had fallen, went berserk and tried to kill Ning. However, Ning was protected by the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]; he wasn't someone they could kill. Those two naturally ended up dying. As for the other four, they were actually delighted by this news, and they willingly allowed Ning to soulscour them.

Their choice, after all, was to serve or to die. They knew what to choose.

Ning had scoured the memories of a total of five Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals, Lilisoft included. He instantly knew far more

regarding the Pangaea chaos-kingdom.

“It seems I really do have to turn towards those True Gods and True Immortals.” Ning sat there within the Voidboat. “The idea which Celestial Immortal Lilisoft came up with is the only possible solution.”

True Gods and True Immortals were far more exalted figures than Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals. Just like in the Three Realms, the difference in status was like the difference between Heaven and Earth.

Status...power...treasures...they were on a completely different level. In fact, in the Pangaea chaos-kingdom, some powerful True Gods and True Immortals of certain schools were permitted to transmit the Dao on their own accord, and so they actually carried certain techniques with them.

Whoosh. The Voidboat flew into the air above a lake. The lake was dotted with tiny little islands, one of which had a True Immortal prisoner on it.

Atop the island.

True Immortal Winterpeak was seated in the lotus position, completely absorbed in his own thoughts. Suddenly, he sensed ripples from the outside world and was startled into wakefulness.

“Someone’s coming?” True Immortal Winterpeak opened his eyes. He instantly saw the white-robed figure who was a few hundred kilometers away. He was quite surprised. “A...True Immortal? With such a puny aura? This is a True Immortal of the weakest variety possible.”

For the denizens of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom, True Immortals had a much higher status than Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals, who were considered equal to each other. Ning’s true body was both a Fiendgod and a Ki Refiner, and Winterpeak could sense the Fiendgod aura emanating from Ning’s body, but he paid much more attention to Ning’s Pure Yang aura. Except...the Pure Yang aura around Ning was ridiculously weak.

“You are the new Overseer?” The look on True Immortal Winterpeak’s face suddenly changed. “What happened to Pangaea? How could it have

sent you here?”

“I imagine you have guessed it already. The Pangaea chaos-kingdom is no more.” Ning stood there in midair as he spoke. “This prisonworld has now fallen into my hands. The previous Overseers probably wouldn’t have dared to assault and kill the prisoners with no cause, but...I dare.”

True Immortal Winterpeak scoffed. “You?”

Naturally, he felt quite arrogant. This sort of puny True Immortal was too weak; Winterpeak would be able to effortlessly dominate him.

“I’ll give you two options.” Ning could sense the aura of danger emanating from the man before him. The aura was so terrifying, it dwarfed even the combined auras of the nearly three hundred Empyrean Gods and True Immortals the Seamless Gate had sent to kill him. This True Immortal of Pangaea definitely was on par with the True Gods and Daofathers of the Three Realms.

“The first choice is to submit to me,” Ning said.

“The second choice is to resist me. I’ll continuously assault you from outside the formation, while you will be unable to attack me at all. Your power is incredible, and you are much more powerful than me...but when you fight against me, you’ll use up your Immortal energy. Once it is all used up, you’ll die.”

“Choose,” Ning said calmly.

True Immortal Winterpeak’s eyes flashed with cold light. In the era of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom, this sort of puny True Immortal would be terrified and quiver in his presence.

“You overestimate your abilities, you crawling insect,” True Immortal Winterpeak said coldly. “None of the trillions of living creatures under my domain would have dared to disobey my commands. An inferior True Immortal like you who was born to a lowly caste...I can stand here and allow you to attack me, and you still won’t be able to injure me.”

His pride and his arrogance, as well as the status he had enjoyed for so long, prevented him from lowering his head before such a weak True

Immortal.

It must be understood that even though he had committed a major offense, the exalted King of Pangaea had only elected to imprison him here.

“Is that so? Then permit a lowly, crawling insect such as myself to see your power.” Ning waved his hand.

Whoosh.

Instantly, a total of 729 Pure Yang flying swords appeared around him. 720 of them had come from the slain Goodhill. All of them were imprinted with the runes of the [Greater Thousand Swords Formation]. With Ning’s fourth-stage heartforce aiding his soul, he was able to activate and command all 729 flying swords at the same time.

Ning’s current soul was capable of controlling even the perfect Heaven Punisher, to say nothing of a few flying swords.

Instantly, a jade sword took form in front of Ning.

[Greater Thousand Swords Formation], level nine!

“Oh, so you have a bit of ability.” True Immortal Winterpeak sat there in the lotus position, a cold smile on his face. This crawling vermin...if it wasn’t for this formation, Winterpeak would be able to easily annihilate him.

Swish.

A streak of light appeared in the skies as the jade sword stabbed straight towards True Immortal Winterpeak.

“Hmph.” Winterpeak just let out a cold snort. A streak of golden light shot out from his eyes, and with a boom, the jade sword formed by Ning’s ninth-level [Greater Thousand Swords Formation] was instantly blasted apart. It was as though Ning’s sword-light was an egg smashing against a rock. Naturally, it had been a completely one-sided ‘fight’.

The difference in power was too great.

“He really does have the power of a True God or Daofather of the Three

Realms.” Ning began to feel even more desire for the chance to upgrade his Jindan, even if it was ‘only’ to the second tier. At least the difference in power wouldn’t be this ridiculously huge.

“Go, go, go!” Ning formed one jade sword after another in front of him. The light of the [Greater Thousand Swords Formation] flashed repeatedly as the swords chopped towards True Immortal Winterpeak.

True Immortal Winterpeak blocked three successive attacks. Finally, he began to frown.

“I’m using up my energy too quickly. If this continues...” True Immortal Winterpeak didn’t want to admit it, but the truth was that controlling magic treasures to fight in this manner used up his energy far too quickly, even though it was simple.

“Go!” A look of anger and embarrassment appeared on his face as he let out this angry roar.

Instantly, a thirty meter tall bowl-shaped treasure appeared. It covered the area where True Immortal Winterpeak was located, protecting him.

For Winterpeak, cowering like a turtle in this fashion was a source of humiliation. But by hiding under a magic treasure, he was able to use up much less of his energy.

Boom! Boom! Boom! One flash of sword-light after another came chopping down upon the bowl-shaped magic treasure, but they were unable to break through.

“Eh?” Ning frowned. “The [Greater Thousand Swords Formation] uses up energy too quickly. If I rely on just absorbing natural energy from the outside world, it’ll take me forever to kill him. If I use spirit-pills to replenish my energy...I’ll end up using too many pills. It seems I have to come up with a low-energy tactic. Ah...right!”

Ning suddenly was struck by a thought. He was reminded of a treasure he had...the Eight Fires Qiankun World! The Eight Fires Qiankun World held eight different types of truefire within it, and their blazing power was quite terrifying. All Ning had to do was use a bit of his own energy to

activate and maintain the Eight Fires Qiankun World. In addition, his foe was trapped within a region of a thousand kilometers; he wouldn't be able to attack the Eight Fires Qiankun World at all. His only option would be to sit there and be roasted.

This was indeed a perfect method. The burning power of the Eight Fires Qiankun World wasn't one whit weaker than Ning's sword-chops with the [Greater Thousand Swords Formation], but it used up far less energy.

Chapter 33: Roaming the Primordial Chaos

“Eh?” True Immortal Winterpeak, hiding under the bowl-shaped treasure, discovered to his astonishment that Ji Ning had halted his attacks.

“He stopped?” With but a thought, Winterpeak dismissed his bowl-shaped treasure. The mere act of keeping a treasure active required him to use up Immortal energy. There were many prisoners here who wouldn’t even use their energy on maintaining their clothes, causing them to corrode and decay over the course of time. Although it was very hard for magic treasures to be damaged, if enough chaos cycles passed, they would still end up destroyed.

Winterpeak raised his head, staring at the white-robed youth in the skies. He smirked. “I urge you to give up. A puny True Immortal like you must be forced to consume an enormous amount of energy to release sword-light of such power. Soon, your energy will be used up, and you’ll have to leave the prisonworld to replenish it, which will take time. It will take a very, very long amount of time for you to wipe out my energy using such a method.”

“Are you afraid?” Ning suddenly asked.

Winterpeak twitched. “Hmph.” After a cold snort, he fell silent.

It was true. He had no way to replenish his Immortal energy, while the Overseer was able to constantly regain it. With enough time, his Immortal energy would be used up in the end.

“Let’s see just how patient you are,” Winterpeak mused to himself.

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Ning had placed the Eight Fires Qiankun World within the Starseizing Manor. He had just sent one of his clones to leave the stone stele and bring it back. Because there was a bit of distance to travel, it took him a full day of flying before he returned.

“Eh?” Winterpeak frowned. He could see yet another white-robed figure flying towards him from afar. “[Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods]?” He instantly was able to guess at the technique.

“Do you really think it’ll take me a lot of energy to attack you?” The white-robed youth waved his hand, and a lotus of fire quickly soared into the skies, moving to a location that was directly above Winterpeak. The flaming lotus faced the ground and began to swivel. At the same time, it quickly expanded to become a thousand kilometers in size as all the petals of the lotus flower began to open.

A total of eight lotus petals completely unfurled, and streams of truefire began to surge towards the ground.

“SHIT!” Winterpeak’s face instantly changed, and the bowl-shaped magic treasure once more appeared around him.

As the sea of flames surged towards him, every single inch of the bowl-shaped treasure was bathed in fire. The ground around him was charred into ash. Winterpeak just stood there in midair, protected by that giant bowl as eight different types of truefire frantically assaulted him from every direction.

“Hmph. This is much easier.” Ning just stood there in midair, watching. The Eight Fires Qiankun World created an independent world of its own, filling it with flame to assault its foes. However, it wasn’t invincible; once the enemy fled outside the world created by the treasure, the enemy would no longer have to fear the assaults of those eight streams of truefire. But alas, these prisoners were completely unable to leave the region they were in.

All they could do was endure the eight punishing streams of truefire.

This was a treasure that had been personally forged by Zhurong, Elder God of Fire. The combined power of these eight types of truefire was truly astonishing. However...since the treasure itself contained and nourished these eight types of truefire, the only attack it really had was truefire. All Ning had to do was to keep the treasure active, then occasionally replenish a little bit of energy.

“Shit, shit, SHIT!” Winterpeak was truly beginning to panic. “This blazing treasure relies on internal flames to attack. It won’t use up much of his energy; he can keep it active indefinitely. I, however, have to continuously use my treasure to defend against it. If this continues...”

“...Where the hell did he find a treasure like this?!”

Winterpeak was both furious and frantic.

The Eight Fires Qiankun World held eight types of truefire in it. This treasure, by itself, was worth more than a hundred top-grade Pure Yang treasures. Although Ning had killed three Celestial Immortals and Empyrean Gods within the prisonworld, he hadn’t acquired a treasure like this from them.

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Within the Starseizing Manor.

A stone stele was placed within a hall.

Swoosh.

Ning appeared out of nowhere. He glanced at the stone stele, then willed it to transform into a streak of light that flew into Ning’s forehead.

“Come out.” Ning glanced sideways, then fifteen more figures appeared out of nowhere. All of them had the auras of Celestial Immortals, and they all had different appearances. These fifteen were fifteen of the eighteen bodies Ning now had, transformed using the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art].

“When they are using the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] to disguise themselves, not even True Gods or Daofathers will be able to see through them, unless those Daofathers see them in person and use special ocular techniques to test them. Not even the major powers who have the ability to view the entire Three Realms and see into Protocosmic spirit-treasures like the Starseizing Manor should be able to tell from far away that these fifteen are all my clones,” Ning mused to himself.

It was very difficult to infiltrate Protocosmic spirit-treasures and see inside of them. The number of people in the Three Realms who could do

such a thing could be counted on two hands. After activating the Ninth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] and transforming...there was definitely no way someone would be able to see through the technique when it was used within the Starseizing Manor.

“Only when no one knows how many clones I have will the clones be safe and effective,” Ning mused to himself.

Ning emerged from the Starseizing Manor, going back to his little thatched cottage. He dispersed the minor clone he had left there, then raised his head and looked towards the Five Treasured Peaks. “Ninefangs,” Ning sent mentally.

Instantly, a streak of light shot towards him. The bald old man, Empyrean God Ninefangs, immediately said respectfully, “Manorlord.”

“Return to the Starseizer world for now. There’s something I need to do,” Ning said.

“Acknowledged,” Ninefangs said.

And then, Ning left by himself aboard the Voidboat, departing from Sword Immortal world.

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The infinite, vast Void held many enormous stars within it. The most dazzling of all stars were the Solar Star and the Lunar Star. In terms of size, even Nuwa’s world or Suiren’s Kindlefir world were much smaller than the Solar Star and the Lunar Star. The light that emanated from these two supreme celestial bodies shone down upon the entire Three Realms.

These were stars that were formed from the primordial chaos as well.

When Pangu had established Heaven and Earth, he had used up an enormous amount of primordial chaos, so much so that a massive area around him became empty and devoid of all matter. This was where the seemingly-infinite Void came from. With all the primordial chaos sucked away, the stars that had been hidden within them now emerged.

Swoosh. A Voidboat was travelling at high speed through the Void,

passing through one star after another. Soon, it reached the end of the Void. Although the Void was often described as 'infinite', there was an end to it...and at the end of the Void was the primordial chaos itself! The Voidboat plunged into the primordial chaos, continuing to fly forward.

“Eh?” Within a world of darkness. The Godking, seated upon his massive, levitating throne, mused pensively to himself, “Why has Ji Ning entered the primordial chaos?”

The Nuwa Alliance had yet to notice Ning's abrupt departure from Sword Immortal world and entry into the primordial chaos, but the Seamless Gate had. This was because the Seamless Gate was worried that Ning was preparing to ambush them once more, and so they had people watching him at all times.

“What's he doing in the primordial chaos?” The Godking was puzzled. “Unfortunately, there's no way for us to investigate.”

The Godking possessed formidable divine abilities, and his invisible power could infiltrate and investigate even the Void itself; there was nothing in the Void that could block it, after all. But there was far too much energy and matter in the primordial chaos; there was no way for him to scan it at all.

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The primordial chaos was vast and truly endless, filled with limitless amounts of gray fog that contained marvelous types of energy and power. If one was able to comprehend the Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos, one would be able to extract chaos energy from these chaos clouds. Ning, however, clearly was not capable of this. He was unable to replenish his energy from the primordial chaos, and so his only choice was to use up his spirit-pills to do so.

But of course, this was fine for a short journey into the primordial chaos. If he spent too much time within it, the end result would be that his energy would be depleted and he would die trapped.

“So many stars.”

He often encountered stars within the primordial chaos. The smallest were perhaps just a million kilometers in size, while the largest were far larger than even a major world.

Although these stars were located within the primordial chaos, they were so close to the Three Realms that the major powers of the Three Realms had already thoroughly searched and investigated them, marking them out in maps. Ning had acquired these maps from Mount Innerheart, and so he travelled the quickest route possible past the various stars.

“I’ll choose this star.”

The star which the Voidboat had reached was a star that was completely formed from unyielding ice. In terms of size, it was probably comparable to the Grand Xia. The entire star emanated an aura of absolute ice, and the surface of the star was dotted with enormous crevices that looked like gorges, as well as bulges that looked like mountain peaks. A wild wind blew through this star, but there were no living creatures on it at all.

Not even Fiendgods or Immortals would be willing to live within such an icy, harsh environment.

“Go.” Ning willed it, and the stone stele instantly flew out from his forehead. As it flew out, it flew straight towards the deep abyss located in front of Ning. Soon, the gusts of wind blew it deep into the bottom of the abyss. Ning used his coresense to watch as the stone stele landed at the bottom. Very soon, a layer of icy frost appeared atop it, causing it to completely freeze within the abyss.

Ordinary people wouldn’t be able to use coresense to locate it. Ning, however, was the master of the stone stele; he was naturally able to sense it, wherever it was.

“There is no way for anyone to locate the stone stele here,” Ning mused to himself. “Not even major powers should be able to scan and locate it from far away within the Void. Even if some of them are so incredibly powerful that they can reach this place with coresense...the stone stele is an incredibly mysterious object. Others have to see it with their actual eyes.”

Even if a major power knew that Ning had the stone stele and had hidden it within this star, the major power would have to visually and physically search through every single inch of the star.

To search through every inch of a star that was the size of the Grand Xia? Hah!

And of course, no one even knew that Ning had placed the stone stele here.

“This place shall be my base for a last stand. If I end up being destroyed, at least the two clones that I will keep within the stone stele will be able to continue to cultivate, eventually restoring all the other clones as well,” Ning mused to himself.

Swoosh.

The Voidboat then continued its journey forward, going past several of the other stars in the primordial chaos before Ning departed from it, returning to the great Void. At his current level of power, he only dared to voyage through the portions of primordial chaos that were very close to the Three Realms and had already been fully investigated by others. He didn't dare to delve any deeper into the chaos.

No one knew that on this voyage into the primordial chaos, Ning had hidden a stone stele with two clones inside of a star. Those two clones would use the Eight Fires Qiankun World and other Pure Yang treasures that could unleash elemental attacks to assault the True Immortal and True God prisoners inside the prisonworld.

Ning returned to the Void, then passed through it to enter the Grand Xia.

Standing in midair, Ning produced a talisman in his hand, filling it with his energy.

“Disciple.” Subhuti's voice rang out in Ning's ears.

Ning said, “Your disciple wishes to return to the Crescent world. In addition...there's something I need to speak to you regarding, Master.”

Whoosh.

Instantly, a whirlpool appeared in the air next to Ning. Ning stepped into it, then began to head towards the Crescent world.

Chapter 34: A Surprise for Subhuti

Ji Ning passed through the spatial vortex. A massive, levitating mountain suddenly appeared before his eyes – Mount Innerheart.

“Uncle-master.”

“Uncle-master.”

“Grand uncle-master.”

Ning occasionally exchanged a few words with familiar faces as he walked up Mount Innerheart. Eventually, he reached Subhuti’s Daoist temple. The two novices at the entrance, Clearwater and Whiteriver, didn’t move to stop him. Clearly, they had already received instructions from the Old Patriarch.

Ning entered the Daoist monastery, then saw his master Subhuti seated in the lotus position in the distance.

“Master.” Ning bowed respectfully.

“What is it?” Subhuti looked towards Ning.

“I ambushed the Seamless Gate’s forces multiple times and killed more than ten Empyrean Gods and True Immortals,” Ning said. “I wanted to force the Seamless Gate to release my senior apprentice-sister, but they still refuse to agree. What I didn’t expect...was that I gained a surprising spoil of war.”

Subhuti chuckled. “And why have you come in person to tell me, your master?”

“The treasures of the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals weren’t that special. My greatest spoils came from the death of a Celestial Immortal, ‘Youngflame Freak,’” Ning said. “Amongst Youngflame Freak’s relics, I found a unique item that contained seven great techniques. These seven techniques are all unfathomably profound, and I had to struggle quite hard in order to learn them. After I learned them, the unique item actually shattered apart and dissolved into nothingness.”

Ning had pondered for a long time before deciding on explaining things thusly.

He could choose to keep these seven techniques a secret from his master, but given that both alliances were at war with each other, and that most of these techniques were useless to him, it was better for him to report it to his superiors.

He wasn't afraid of the Seamless Gate acting against him; rather, he was more afraid of someone from his own alliance acting against him! For example, if a major power who was on par with Subhuti suspected that Ning had acquired formidable treasures from alien Outsiders, then killed Ning, Subhuti might be enraged...but it would be too late for Ning.

"Oh?" Subhuti smiled and nodded. "It may have been a legacy left behind by a major power."

It was fairly common for a legacy-teaching item to automatically shatter once the legacy was taught. This was done to prevent the legacy leaking and becoming too widespread.

"These are the seven techniques your disciple has memorized." Ning produced a bamboo scroll. "Your disciple has already copied them down in their entirety. Master, please take a look."

Subhuti accepted the scroll, then sent his coresense into it to read.

A full hour passed. Subhuti was completely occupied by his reading, while Ning simply stood there to one side, waiting quietly.

"Ji Ning." Finally, Subhuti raised his head, a look of surprise and delight on his face. "You've just done a great deed."

Ning felt a relaxed feeling in his heart. It would be good if this could help his alliance. His personal power was limited, and of the seven techniques, the only ones that were of benefit to him were the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] and [Armaments of Sin]. [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] could only be trained to the second level if one had some extraordinarily precious 'chaos nectar'. As for the other techniques, for now it was difficult for him to advance in them.

“These seven techniques are definitely techniques left behind by alien Outsiders.” Subhuti let out a shocked sigh. “I didn’t expect that this weak little Celestial Immortal was actually holding techniques like this. It seems that a slain alien Outsider must have left his relics and treasures behind somewhere in the Three Realms, with Youngflame Freak discovering them.”

“I know quite a few alien Outsider techniques, but these seven techniques are definitely top-tier ones. The [Jewel Talisman] is the most useful one of all!” Subhuti’s face was covered with excitement.

“You have quite a few alien Outsider techniques?” Ning looked at his master.

“Of course.” Subhuti laughed. “We’ve killed quite a few alien Outsiders in the years since the Primordial Era. Some were as powerful as Rahu, and the Lord of All Things was particularly powerful. He had a mighty army under his command, but we wiped them out. Naturally, we ended up with the relics they left behind. The seven techniques you gained must have similarly been left behind in the Three Realms by a slain alien Outsider.”

Ning nodded.

“However...while some alien Outsider techniques are very useful, some are...” Subhuti shook his head. “Some require treasures that exist in the worlds where they were from, but don’t exist in the Three Realms at all; those techniques are naturally useless. For example, the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods]; an enormous amount of treasures are needed to train to the second level, some of which I’ve never even heard of.”

“We’ve previously acquired two types of ‘clone body’ techniques from the alien Outsiders. These two are the [Twelve Heavens Fiendgod] and the [Thousand Bodies Sutra]. The [Twelve Heavens Fiendgod] technique is very similar to this technique of yours, but it allows for the creation of only twelve bodies, and it’s a bit easier to train as well. There are a few experts amongst the major powers who train in it. As for the [Thousand Bodies Sutra], it’s extremely formidable; when mastered, one can use it to transform into a thousand clones, each of which is as powerful as the

original body. Once they merge together, the true body's power will explosively increase. But alas, just gaining a basic level of skill in the [Thousand Bodies Sutra] requires a treasure known as a 'Worldheart'. Where are we supposed to find treasures like that?"

"Thousand Bodies Sutra?" Ning was shocked. To be able to transform into a thousand clones? That was too terrifying!

"A 'Worldhearts' is created after countless years pass in a chaosworld and the chaosworld begins to grow old. When the chaosworld dies, it'll transform into an extremely small gemstone which is the source of energy for many new Fiendgods to eventually be born and establish a new chaosworld. This gemstone is known as a 'Worldheart'." Subhuti chuckled. "The [Thousand Bodies Sutra] requires a Worldheart. We only have a single chaosworld, the 'Three Realms'; where are we supposed to find a Worldheart?"

Ning had searched the memories of several Celestial Immortals and Empyrean Gods of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom. He knew of Worldhearts.

Worldhearts were treasures that were even more valuable and rare than chaos nectar!

The Pangaea chaos-kingdom might have acquired some in the past, but without question they were in the hands of the King of Pangaea or the other two World-level experts. The Ancestral Immortals and Elder Gods could forget about acquiring them!

"Of the seven techniques you acquired, the [Jewel Talisman] is the most useful technique of all. [Armaments of Sin] will also be of some use in an era like ours; I trust that it will give birth to some new Protocosmic spirit-treasures," Subhuti said. "However...to rely on slaughter alone to give birth to Chaos treasures is far too difficult. I can't even imagine how many people you would have to kill to give birth to one."

The leaders of Buddhism and Daoism, the Three Emperors, the Five Monarchs, Subhuti, and many other mighty major powers had access to Chaos treasures. Thus, they wouldn't care too much about [Armaments of Sin].

“But of course, this [Armaments of Sin] technique will be of use to you.” Subhuti chuckled. “Still...the [Jewel Talisman] technique allows for the creation of Dao-seals. Every single Dao-seal creation technique is tightly guarded. You can create Dao-seals in advance, then use a large number of them in battle to overwhelm and slay your foe.”

“Naturally, that’s only possible if we can find an expert in Dao-seals who can understand the mysteries of this [Jewel Talisman]. In the Three Realms, the most powerful expert in the art of formations and talismans would be Human Emperor Fuxi,” Subhuti said with a smile. “Even I feel delighted upon having reviewed the [Jewel Talisman], and I’ll be able to produce some new Dao-seals. When Fuxi sees it...he might be able to learn everything within it.”

Ning was speechless.

The [Jewel Talisman] was simply unfathomably profound; when he read it, he felt like he was reading gibberish. To Human Emperor Fuxi, however, this would indeed be shockingly useful.

“Right. You said that Youngflame Freak was in possession of that item; did he learn these seven techniques?” Subhuti’s face suddenly changed.

Ning hurriedly explained, “Master, I had to use all my power to learn these seven techniques. Given that Youngflame Freak was a Celestial Immortal, I expect that he was probably just barely able to learn the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] and part of the [Nine Bug Solutions]. He wouldn’t have the ability needed to learn the rest.”

“That’s what I hoped to hear.” Subhuti chuckled. “The [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] and [Nine Bug Solutions] aren’t that dangerous. In the past, when there was peace between us and the Seamless Gate, many of us were friends with each other. In fact, some of us became lifelong, bosom friends, and we exchanged many techniques. They have many of ours and we have many of theirs. They have the [Twelve Heavens Fiendgod] and the [Thousand Bodies Sutra] as well. As for the [Nine Bug Solutions]...given that a very long period of time is needed to breed these bugs, and that the process is a very expensive one, neither side has the luxury of time and

resources that would be needed.”

Ning nodded.

“Still...just to ensure that nothing unexpected happens, Youngflame Freak needs to be gotten rid of,” Subhuti said.

“Right.” Ning nodded.

Ning had first bound the treasures left behind by the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals, then began to work on the many other relics he had acquired. Only at the very end did he discover the stone stele hidden away amongst the miscellaneous items. Binding so many treasures had taken him a full day. If Youngflame Freak was going to reveal it to anyone, he would’ve done so long ago, and so Ning hadn’t been in a rush to kill his final few clones, pulling up grass by the roots.

.....

Indeed...

Youngflame Freak was hoping to be lucky enough to survive.

“Of those seven techniques, I was only able to learn the first technique and part of the second technique.” Youngflame Freak was sitting within a palace, drinking wine. “I could tell, however, that these were all inconceivably profound techniques. And the aura that stone stele emanated...it was even more terrifyingly powerful than the Heavenly Daos! If I was to report this loss to the Seamless Gate...in order to ensure that none of the techniques are leaked, they’ll probably kill me to silence me, once they acquire the technique from Ji Ning.”

“Ji Ning will probably hide those seven techniques for his own use. He won’t be willing to tell others about them.”

“Right. It has to be that way.”

Youngflame Freak himself had kept those seven techniques hidden without telling anyone else at all. He believed that Ji Ning would do the same.

In addition, he didn’t even dare to make a report. If he gave such a

powerful technique to the Seamless Gate, he might be silenced and killed instead of rewarded. Youngflame Freak knew exactly how the Seamless Gate acted...they were absolutely savage and brutal.

“Uhh...” Youngflame Freak suddenly felt his head turn dizzy.

“W-what’s going...”

.....

“Die...”

“I...might as well die...”

Youngflame Freak’s eyes turned dim...and then his soul dispersed and shattered. He died...and the same happened to his other clone.

.....

Mount Innerheart.

Subhuti closed his eyes for a moment, then opened them. He looked at Ning. “The other two bodies of Youngflame Freak have now died. All eighteen bodies have perished now.”

Ning let out a sigh of relief.

Fortunately, Youngflame Freak didn’t possess a treasure like the Voidboat; he didn’t dare to journey out within the primordial chaos, and so he kept all his clones within the Three Realms. Subhuti was thus able to effortlessly kill him. Much like how Ning would be able to effortlessly hypnotize weaker cultivators, Subhuti was able to effortlessly cause a Celestial Immortal to commit suicide.

Of course, the Seamless Gate would’ve deeply desired to cause Ning to commit suicide in such a manner as well. However, Ning’s heartforce had reached the fourth level, the same level as that of many Daofathers; there was no way the Seamless Gate could force Ning to commit suicide.

“Let’s go. Accompany me on a visit to Human Emperor Fuxi,” Subhuti said with a laugh. “When he sees this [Jewel Talisman], he’s going to be delirious with joy. A top-tier seal-creation technique like this...this is something he dreams of.”

Whoosh. A spatial vortex appeared before them.

Subhuti took Ning by the arm and led him straight into the spatial vortex.

Chapter 35: Meeting Fuxi

They emerged from the spatial vortex. In front of them, as far as the eye could see, were endless flows of primordial chaos. A short while ago, Ji Ning had journeyed by himself into the primordial chaos, but of course he had only toured the region that was very close to the Three Realms.

“Fuxi is currently within the primordial chaos, working on various formations,” Subhuti said. “Of the Three Emperors of Mankind, Shennong and Fuxi spend most of their time in the primordial chaos, with Suiren usually staying at the Kindlefire world.”

As he spoke, he led Ning forward at high speed.

Space and time constantly shifted about them, causing them to move incredibly fast.

“Is that...” Due to the speed at which they were moving, the flows of primordial chaos around them became blurry and hard to see. However, Ning suddenly saw an enormous blazing fire appear in the distance.

“There we are.” Subhuti’s voice rang out as their speed suddenly and dramatically lessened.

Ning was quickly led by his master towards those towering flames. The flames roared and hissed in a veritable sea of conflagration. It was hard to see where the sea of flames ended.

“Water?” Ning suddenly discovered to his astonishment that there seemed to be dark, barely-visible waves that were rippling above the sea of flames. Only when he stared at them carefully did he recognize them for what they were...countless waves of black water.

Below was an endless sea of flames, while above were endless waves of black water. The two seemed to be part of a whole, and the space between the flames and the waves seemed to be continuously destroyed.

“Fuxi,” Subhuti called out.

Whoosh!

Instantly, a corridor appeared within the sea of flames in front of them. The flames on each side of the corridor couldn't enter it in the slightest.

"Come, let's go inside," Subhuti said.

Ning followed behind Subhuti, the two of them flying inside.

"Is this a formation which the Human Emperor set up?" Ning couldn't help but ask. "These flames...I can't even tell what type of flames they are."

The most famous flames in the Three Realms were the nine types of truefire.

"This is the 'Eternal Kindlefire' which Human Emperor Suiren developed," Subhuti said. "These flames surpass the nine types of truefire in power. As for the waves of water above them, they were formed by extracting the essence of Arcane Moonwater from the Lunar Star. The Kindlefire was established with the help of Suiren, which is why the flames are so numerous. The essence of the Lunar Star, however, has to be extracted by Fuxi himself, which is why there is a bit less of the water. This is a formation that Fuxi has been working on for some time, and it isn't perfected yet."

Ning was stunned. Eternal Kindlefire? Arcane Lunar Water?

Most weaker cultivators, including Ning himself, had no idea that there were any flames more powerful than the nine types of truefire. Ning himself only found out now.

Solar Truefire was commonly seen on the surface of the Solar Star; there was an enormous amount of it there. However, Golden Solarfire came from the very core of the Solar Star, and its power was far greater than that of Solar Truefire. Golden Solarfire...even True Gods and Daofathers had to be careful around it. If they weren't carefully, they'd be burnt to death.

Golden Solarfire came from nature itself. However, the Zhurong Godfire which Elder God of Fire Zhurong created was also a type of fire that surpassed the nine mighty types of truefire. Alas...Elder God Zhurong

himself had perished long ago.

Human Emperor Suiren had developed the Eternal Kindlefire, which was another type of fire that surpassed the nine types of truefire.

The Three Realms also had nine types of truewater. Above them in power were two types of water; Arcane Moonwater from the Lunar Star, and the Gonggong Godwater from Elder God of Water Gonggong. Alas, Elder God Gonggong had also died long ago.

The ten exalted Elder Gods had fought amongst themselves during the Primordial Era, and several of them had died in their struggles for supremacy.

In truth, Pangu wasn't really an 'Elder God', he was a World God. However, back then the various Fiendgods didn't know what 'World Gods' even were. Because Pangu was simply far too overwhelmingly powerful, the ten Elder Gods considered Pangu to be in a class of his own, the 'Pangu level', a level which surpassed all Immortals, Buddhas, Fiends, and Gods.

Pangu established Heaven and Earth, then died from his labors.

Mother Nuwa entered the primordial chaos, never to return.

Elder God Fuxi had been reborn as a human, becoming Human Emperor Fuxi.

Multiple Elder Gods had died during the struggles for supremacy of the Primordial Era.

The war against the Seamless Chaosworld and the Lord of All Things that destroyed the Primordial Era had resulted in the deaths of even more Elder Gods.

Thus, the likes of Human Emperor Fuxi were now forced to laboriously extract Arcane Moonwater from the Lunar Star. Fortunately, Fuxi was a master of the Heavenly Daos of Yin and Yang, which was why he was able to draw upon the supremely Yin-aligned Arcane Moonwater. However, clearly his skill in controlling water was not a match for Suiren's skill in controlling fire.

“Fuxi has focused his efforts on the art of formations. If he was to focus his efforts on water...given his power and his insights into the Heavenly Daos of Yin and Yang, he probably would’ve long ago been able to develop a form of arcane water that surpassed the nine types of trewater,” Subhuti said with a sigh.

“In his past life, he was an Elder God that was a master of the Heavenly Dao of Destruction. In this life, he is a Human Emperor, but he has decided to focus on formations.” Ning felt extremely curious regarding Fuxi.

Fuxi was someone who stood at the very peak of the Three Realms, in both this life and the previous one.

Whoosh.

After they passed through the flame corridor, they saw an island that was a few hundred meters long hover there in the midst of the primordial chaos. Atop the island was a tall, muscular man dressed in Daoist robes who was seated in the lotus position. His robes were covered with many Taiji diagrams, Eight Trigrams diagrams, stellar diagrams, and other types of formation-diagrams. The area surrounding him was filled with countless swirling runes. Fuxi was staring at the countless runes, occasionally changing them and occasionally moving them around.

“Don’t be impatient. Wait a bit,” Subhuti instructed.

“Understood.” Ning nodded.

After the time needed to boil a kettle of tea, the distant Fuxi finally came to a halt, allowing all the runes around him to disappear.

Smiling, Fuxi looked towards Subhuti and Ning. “Subhuti, why have you brought your treasured disciple here? Come, sit.”

He waved his hand, producing a pair of prayer mats in front of him. In front of each prayer mat was a table covered with wine.

Subhuti led Ning forward. The two seated themselves.

“Naturally, I come bearing good news.” Subhuti handed the scroll Ning

had given him to Fuxi. "Take a look."

"Oh?" Fuxi accepted the scroll, then immediately sent his coresense into it to examine it. Upon doing so, he instantly became completely transfixed.

"Don't be impatient," Subhuti said to Ning. "This is just how Fuxi is. Let's just wait here for now. Come, taste the wine. This is wine which Fuxi personally created using his insights into the art of formations. There's no other place with wine like this."

Ning lifted up his winecup, taking a sip. Instantly, an incredibly comfortable feeling spread throughout his body. Even his soul felt more relaxed.

"It really is fine wine." Ning sighed in amazement.

"No one else can make it," Subhuti agreed.

These two, master and disciple, began to chat and drink the wine. The tables were covered with what appeared to be small flagons of wine, but in truth every single flagon contained an enormous lake of Immortal wine within it. The two drank to their hearts content for more than a full day before Human Emperor Fuxi finally withdrew his coresense from the bamboo scroll.

"Good. Good. Good!" Fuxi was so excited, he said the word 'good' three times in a row.

"What do you think?" Subhuti looked at him. "The [Jewel Talisman] is nice, eh?"

"The Dao-seals recorded within the [Jewel Talisman] are all incredibly marvelous. I had to spend six hours to completely comprehend all of them. Once I acquire all the necessary materials, I'll be able to construct quite a few powerful Dao-seals." Fuxi chuckled, "Thanks to these Dao-seals, our Nuwa Alliance will have an extra tool to rely on. Although the benefits will be minor...when many minor effects are added together, they'll be able to influence the overall course of events."

Upon hearing the words 'benefits will be minor', Ning instantly understood that the Nuwa Alliance had an extremely deep foundation,

many of which he had no idea about.

The Seamless Gate had formidable abilities, but the Nuwa Alliance did as well.

“At this point in time, there are very few things that can increase the power of our Nuwa Alliance as a whole. This [Jewel Talisman], however, is one of them.” Fuxi shook his head and sighed. “However, as far as I’m concerned, the most beneficial technique of the seven was the [Qiankun Reversing Gestalt-Formation]. The reason I spent so much time just now was primarily because of that formation.”

“What? The [Qiankun Reversing Gestalt-Formation]? It helped you significantly?” Subhuti was puzzled. “This formation requires eighteen individuals to set up, and it also requires them to be of completely one mind. How could it have been of assistance to you?”

“Ah, this is where you are wrong.” Fuxi shook his head. “Although this is an excellent formation, the formation that I’m developing is even more astonishingly powerful. I naturally won’t turn towards setting up the [Qiankun Reversing Gestalt-Formation]. However...the mysteries and secrets this formation contains are completely different from those used to set up formations in the Three Realms. In addition, it is especially powerful in the ‘Qiankun Reversal’ aspect.”

Fuxi sighed. “All these years, I’ve been slowly working on my Waterflame Apocalypse Formation and coming up with ideas on how to better combine these two types of supreme fire and water. The ‘Qiankun Reversal’ in the gestalt-formation gave me many new ideas. Although the [Qiankun Reversing Gestalt-Formation] isn’t that powerful, the person who developed it is most likely much more powerful than even myself in the Dao of Formations.”

At Fuxi’s level, when he looked at a formation, Fuxi looked at how the formation was constructed. He was able to completely ‘disassemble’ it into its component parts. Clearly, Fuxi had gained what he had needed from this formation.

And it was true; this [Qiankun Reversing Gestalt-Formation] had indeed

been created by a major power within the primordial chaos, expressly for those who trained in the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods]. However...when Fuxi said that this person was superior to him in the Dao of Formations, Fuxi had been wrong. The major power that had created this formation had lived in a completely different environment, which was why there were naturally many differences in the mysteries this formation contained. This was the reason why Fuxi had gained so many new ideas upon seeing this formation. In terms of actual insight into the Dao of Formations, however, the creator of the [Qiankun Reversing Gestalt-Formation] was just barely on par with Fuxi.

“Can it help you perfect the Waterflame Apocalypse Formation?” Subhuti was surprised and delighted.

Eternal Kindlefire, Arcane Moonwater; either of the two were tremendously powerful on their own. But if Fuxi was to successfully and perfectly combine the two of them...the results would be utterly astonishing. It would be extremely useful during the final Endwar, and it would give them better chances of winning it.

“It was indeed of use.” Fuxi nodded. “However, I’m still far, far away from being able to completely perfect this technique. I still need to spend some more time analyzing this gestalt-formation in detail. Mm. These seven techniques...all of them are excellent. They clearly do not belong to the Three Realms; they should have come from alien Outsiders. Since you brought your disciple over...was it Ji Ning who discovered these seven techniques?”

“Yes.” Subhuti nodded.

Fuxi looked towards Ning, then sighed in a gratified manner. “All people are selfish. Petty selfishness is focused on the self; nobler selfishness is focused on one’s family, one’s clan, one’s nation, one’s race, and even one’s entire world. You are merely an Empyrean God and a True Immortal. For you to be willing to hand over these seven precious techniques...this really is quite rare and admirable.”

Ning felt ashamed upon hearing this. He had indeed given the seven

techniques to his master for the sake of the Nuwa Alliance, but he had kept the stone stele for himself. He had hidden it away without telling anyone, partially because he was worried about the Seamless Gate's formidable intelligence mechanisms, but also because he wanted to keep something in reserve for himself. It was very possible that he might die as a result of this storm that was sweeping the Three Realms. He wasn't afraid of dying, but if he died, who would protect his daughter?

“Of the seven techniques you provided, the [Jewel Talisman] will be of benefit to the entire Nuwa Alliance, while the [Qiankun Reversing Gestalt-Formation] is of considerable benefit to me. Mm...I can't just take these things from you without giving anything back,” Fuxi said.

Chapter 36: Skyrocketing Cultivation

Fuxi pondered for a moment, then said, “Ji Ning, how much of the perfect Heaven Punisher’s power can you control?”

“I can already control all of it,” Ji Ning said respectfully.

“Oh...”

Fuxi revealed a small smile. “This type of grand formation that involves commanding countless Celestial Immortals and Loose Immortals is extremely taxing on both heartforce and Immortal energy, and it also requires a powerful soul heartforce technique. Of all the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Three Realms, you are the one who is best-suited to commanding these formations. Prior to this, there was no one as skilled as you in this regard, which is why the likes of the perfect Heaven Punisher Formation were viewed as the apex.”

Ning nodded. There were several formations comparable to the Heaven Punisher Formation, and his own master Subhuti had access to some of them. Since their power was on par with that of the Heaven Punisher Formation, Ning hadn’t asked for them.

“Fourth level heartforce, and a soul heartforce technique...yes, you really are a perfect fit for these formations.” Fuxi chuckled. “Give me a bit of time, I’ll gift you with a formation that will allow you to control even more Celestial Immortals and Loose Immortals. Naturally, the maximum power of the formation will greatly increase as well! However, controlling it will also be considerably more difficult.”

“Thank you, Human Emperor.” Ning was overjoyed. In truth, he wasn’t interested in any treasures the Human Emperor could give him, because Ning already had access to Protocosmic spirit-treasures. In addition, two of Ning’s clones were within the prisonworld and were assaulting the various True Gods and True Immortals; he would definitely have plenty of powerful treasures in the future! A Chaos treasure would be excellent, but what were the chances that Fuxi would give him one? Many major powers didn’t even have access to such treasures!

A formation that was more powerful than the Heaven Punisher Formation was something which Ning was in desperate need of. This was because Ning's most powerful battle-mode was the Heaven Punisher mode. However, he had already completely utilized all the power available to the perfect Heaven Punisher; there was no way to increase his level of power at all. But alas, there were no superior formations of this type in all the Three Realms, and there were very few individuals who were capable of creating one.

Fuxi, however, was definitely the most powerful expert in the Three Realms in the Dao of Formations.

"This won't be too difficult for me. All I have to do is spend a bit of effort on it when I'm not working on the Waterflame Apocalypse Formation. I imagine I should be able to complete it within ten years," Fuxi said.

"Disciple." The nearby Subhuti looked towards Ning. "You can count on one hand the number of times Fuxi has custom-designed a formation for someone. This is incredibly rare. Fuxi, Ning and I won't disturb you any further."

"Alright." Fuxi smiled and nodded. "I'll have to trouble you to leave my formation first."

Whoosh.

A corridor appeared in the endless sea of flames in front of them.

Subhuti immediately led Ning out through the corridor. Within this Waterflame Apocalypse Formation, not even Subhuti was able to engage in teleportation. He had to first leave the formation area, then teleport. This was a formation that Fuxi had spent countless eons perfecting; its power was truly terrifying.

They returned to Mount Innerheart.

"Master," Ning said respectfully, "I wonder if I can teach this [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] technique to Uncle White and the others."

Subhuti said, "This is a technique that you acquired; by all rights, I shouldn't stop you from teaching it to others. However, it's best if you do

not. Your spirit-beasts are all too weak, after all. It's impossible for the Seamless Gate to stealthily steal this technique from your mind, but your spirit-beasts haven't even undergone the Celestial Tribulation. That 'Godking' would probably be able to steal away those techniques from them in their dreams."

"How about this? If you want to teach them something, teach them the [Twelve Heavens Fiendgod] technique. There are others in the Three Realms who have mastered it and are able to transform into twelve bodies that each have the power of the original."

"Understood," Ning said. "I'll go pay them a visit, then I'll leave the Crescent world."

"Go." Subhuti nodded.

First, Ning carefully read through the entire [Twelve Heavens Fiendgod] technique. This technique was very similar to the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods]; both were divided into three levels.

The first level allowed the true body to divide into twelve clones, with each clone being much weaker in power than the original. This state was actually not a very good one; the only benefit was that it allowed the user to have a much better chance at staying alive.

The second level allowed for all twelve bodies to rise in power, returning to the level which the original body had been at.

The third level allowed for all twelve bodies to merge back together into a single true body once more, with the true body instantly and explosively increasing in power.

This was almost identical to the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] formation. However, it was noticeably easier to train in, and it required less materials. In fact, all of the ingredients needed to train to the second level could be located within the Three Realms! But of course, all of those ingredients were still quite rare and expensive. In addition, the more powerful one was, the more of the ingredients would be needed, as the cost of training would increase.

After soulscouring the prisoners of the prisonworld, Ning had learned quite a bit. Fairy Lilisoft, for example, had been the King of Pangaea's daughter. The other Empyrean God and Celestial Immortal prisoners were similarly extraordinary figures who also knew many things.

For example, Ning had learned from them that to train to the second level of the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods], a Celestial Immortal of the first tier would generally need a full bottle of chaos nectar!

Ning had roughly used up a full bottle as well, but a little was left over. This was because Ning was the lowest-tier True Immortal. In terms of the quality of his Immortal energy, he was merely on par with the highest-tier Celestial Immortals. But in terms of how much energy he had, he actually had much less. This was because first-tier Celestial Immortals formed their Jindans through absorbing the energy of an entire vast world. Their Jindan regions were quite shocking, and the amount of Immortal energy they contained was huge.

First-tier True Immortals would generally need a hundred bottles of chaos nectar to succeed! In every aspect, be it the Jindan or the soul, first-tier True Immortals were far more powerful than first-tier Celestial Immortals.

First-tier True Immortals...their coresense was enough to cover an entire chaosworld! In the Three Realms, only True Gods and Daofathers had this sort of power. One could judge the power of one's soul from the strength of one's coresense. To split such a powerful soul into eighteen parts, then have all of them return to the power level of the original soul...the amount of chaos nectar that would be consumed was enormous.

If a first-tier Ancestral Immortal was to train in the technique, the price would increase a hundredfold!

The more powerful one was, the greater the price one would have to pay to acquire eighteen clones of tremendous power. Thus, even the King of Pangaea had only been able to train to the second stage as a True Immortal. After becoming an Ancestral Immortal, he had wandered through the primordial chaos and experienced many hardships before

being lucky enough to acquire the resources to master the third stage of the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods]. His power level had instantly exploded, making him an absolute hegemon amongst Ancestral Immortals. After he broke through to the World-level, he was thus able to build up an extremely powerful nation and slay other World-level experts, with two such experts electing to follow him.

In the entire Pangaea chaos-kingdom, only the King of Pangaea had fully mastered this technique.

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Within a quiet little city.

A black-robed Ning was seated within a winehouse, staring far away while holding a winecup in his hands. He watched as a woman was leading a girl forward through the distant streets.

The woman was Autumn Leaf.

The girl was Brightmoon.

“Junior apprentice-brother. Uncle White.” Ning looked towards Mu Northson and Uncle White. “Wait here for now. I’m going to make a short trip, but I’ll be back soon.”

“Alright, senior apprentice-brother. Go ahead. We’ll keep an eye on things here,” Northson said with a laugh.

“Don’t worry, son,” Uncle White said.

They had spent the past period of time wandering the Crescent world alongside the childlike Brightmoon. Everyone had been quite relaxed, and this caused both Northson and Uncle White to both become more amiable and gentler.

The black-robed Ning nodded, then disappeared without a trace. Although some people in the winehouse were watching, none of them thought that anything was amiss.

Outside the little city, there was a seemingly ordinary-looking Immortal estate. This was a Pure Yang treasure which Ning’s Primaltwin was

controlling, their temporary home. Because he wanted to give his daughter Brightmoon a good upbringing, he naturally couldn't just let her wander about the Crescent world willy-nilly. She had to have a permanent place to call home.

The black-robed Ning flew into the Immortal estate. A white-robed Ning was already inside, having come here to deliver a bottle of chaos nectar.

Just half a day later, within a private room inside the Immortal estate. Eighteen black-robed Ji Nings were seated in the lotus position. All of their auras were completely suppressed, and they seemed to be ordinary mortals. All of them opened their eyes, smiling at each other.

“The second level is complete.”

After handing them the copy of the [Twelve Heavens Fiendgod] technique, Ning's true body had immediately left. The Primaltwin had used up a bottle of chaos nectar to master the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] technique. However, all eighteen clones had completely suppressed their auras. When Ning had broken through to become a Pure Yang True Immortal, none of the other major powers of the Three Realms had been able to find out, because of this aura-suppressing technique which Patriarch Subhuti had taught him.

Ning continued to keep his aura suppressed. So long as Ning didn't voluntarily activate these eighteen clones, no one would be able to find out how powerful Ning's eighteen Primaltwin clones were.

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Sword Immortal world. The Five Treasured Peaks.

Ning had returned.

“All the arrangements have been made.” Ning stood there in front of his thatched cottage, staring at the distant, towering Five Treasured Peaks. The five peaks continued to emanate that shocking, breathtaking aura of majesty. “The stone stele has already been hidden away. I now have a better chance of surviving this great storm. My Primaltwin has now successfully manifested eighteen clones as well. Only...I only have slightly

more than sixteen bottles of chaos nectar left.”

Swoosh. Ning flew towards the second mountain of the Five Treasured Peaks, beginning to read the second chapter of the [Five Treasures] sword-art and meditate on it.

.....

Within the Starseizing Manor. Those fifteen clones of his true body were all seated in the lotus position, completely focused on meditating on the [Five Treasures] sword-art.

.....

Within the stone stele. The two clones of his true body were using some of their energy to maintain the Eight Fires Qiankun World, but they didn't have to spend much attention on it, and so they were also meditating on the [Five Treasures] sword-art.

.....

Within the Crescent world. Seventeen clones of his Primaltwin were all meditating on the [Five Treasures] sword-art, with the final clone spending all of its time and energy on taking care of Brightmoon.

.....

It could be said that right now, thirty-five Ji Nings spread across his 'true bodies' and 'Primaltwins' were simultaneously meditating on the [Five Treasures] sword-art. Or, to put it another way...compared to before Ning had started to train in the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods], Ning's training speed was now thirty-five times faster.

“This sword-art is incomparably arcane and unfathomable...”

The thirty-five clones all shared the same mind and memories. When one gained an insight, all of them gained the insight, and so a nonstop flow of insights was entering his mind.

Chapter 37: Roaming the Three Realms

Time flowed on. In the blink of an eye, more than half a year had passed.

Next to a towering, cloud-piercing mountain peaks. Ji Ning stood atop a cloud, staring upwards towards the sword-art left behind on the mountain wall.

“The [Five Treasures] sword-art truly is a sword-art that has surpassed the limits of the Heavenly Daos. I’m just a tiny bit away, but...I’m unable to completely master the second chapter.” Ning frowned. During this past half year, he had almost completely mastered the entire second chapter at one go, but the final bottleneck had stymied him.

Bottlenecks were terrifying things for cultivators to face. There were many who would be stuck at a bottleneck for countless years without being able to advance! Time alone wouldn’t necessarily suffice for a cultivator to break through a bottleneck; if one could constantly improve, then logically speaking all Celestial Immortals should eventually become True Immortals. Clearly, however, this wasn’t the case. The reason why Ning had been able to break through the final bottleneck and master the complete Dao of the Sword was because he had battled in the Nihilum Zone for eighteen years, and had mastered first level swordforce. This was why things proceeded so smoothly for him.

“This next breakthrough won’t be so easy. What should I do?” Ning frowned. At this point, not even his many clones could help him.

“Standing here like an idiot won’t be of any use. Breakthroughs require luck and destiny.” Ning immediately sent a mental message. “Ninefangs.”

Swoosh! A streak of light flew over, landing atop the cloud. It was the bald old man, Ninefangs. Empyrean God Ninefangs immediately said respectfully, “Manorlord.”

“I wish to travel through the Three Realms,” Ning said.

“Travel through the Three Realms?” Ninefangs was startled. He gave Ning a close look. He had thought that Ning wanted to once more ambush

the Seamless Gate...but now, it seemed, that wasn't the case.

"Let's go." Ning immediately led Ninefangs away from Sword Immortal world.

.....

Within a vast world of darkness. The Godking, seated upon his great, levitating throne, immediately received word of Ning's departure.

"Ji Ning has left Sword Immortal world." The Godking immediately released his powerful coresense to investigate Ning's whereabouts. "He's already gone to...Tigerfang major world."

After having suffered such severe losses last time, the Seamless Gate would naturally be prepared for a reoccurrence. They wouldn't succumb to the same trick twice.

.....

The Tigerfang world.

A wooden ship was drifting through a wide river. Atop the wooden ship was a white-robed youth who was drinking wine by himself. Next to him stood an old, respectful, bald-headed servant.

"This Tigerfang world belongs to the mighty Immortal Tigerfang. He rose to sudden prominence during the Primordial Era, and even took part in the war that ended that era. However, he likes to travel alone and does as he pleases, and so he dislikes taking apprentices. There are still two Empyrean Gods who are willing to follow him, and he is quite a powerful figure of the Three Realms.

The Xia Emperor had relied on his experts and his background to unify the Grand Xia. Mighty Immortal Tigerfang, however, had completely relied on his own personal power.

"if I didn't rely on the Heaven Punisher Formation, I probably wouldn't be a match for him either," Ning chuckled. The Three Realms had many Empyrean Gods and True Immortals, the most supreme of which all had formations of their own that were comparable to the Heaven Punisher

Formation. In this regard, none of them were able to overcome Ning. But in a purely one-on-one fight...there indeed quite a few who were stronger than Ning. In fact, in his very own school, Mount Innerheart, there were a number of fellow disciples who were superior to him.

Redsnow, Patriarch Lu, Immortal Tigerfang...they were at the very precipice of becoming True Gods or Daofathers. In terms of the Dao or in terms of techniques, they were significantly superior to Ning. Ning had to admit to their superiority in these areas. He simply hadn't spent enough time cultivating, and his mind had been focused on cultivating his swordforce and heartforce. After all, he simply didn't have enough time slowly meditate on many Daos in the midst of this great storm.

"Manorlord, be wary of the Seamless Gate," Ninefangs cautioned mentally.

"Don't worry," Ning said. Once they entered the Tigerfang, Ning had immediately sent his heartforce out to cover the entire world.

"The Seamless Gate is currently quite cautious. When I was in Sword Immortal world, there was someone using his coresense to watch over me at all times. They probably knew the moment I left the world. Although Tigerfang world has quite a few bases of the Seamless Gate, only one of them has Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. That base has a total of nineteen. They should've just hurried over there a short while ago. If nineteen Empyrean Gods and True Immortals hide behind protective formations...there's no way for me to breach their defenses at all." Ning shook his head.

In his heart, however, Ning sighed. He had succeeded in his first ambush, but it would now be far more difficult for him to give the Seamless Gate a few more vicious cuts.

"Come, try again."

"Tired already? Is this all you have?"

"Come on!"

Voices could be heard from far away.

Ning turned to sweep towards that area with his gaze. Far away, there was a village located next to the side of the river. The villagers relied on the river to make their living. Within the village, there was a tall, muscular, fur-clad man who was training a youth in using the sword. The muscular man was calling out repeatedly, "Come on! Hit harder! Hit smarter! Your sword-arts need to be more direct and forceful. All those fancy flourishes are useless!"

Boom! The youth's sword came chopping down, but he instantly was knocked flying. He landed on the ground, then quickly and grimly clambered to his feet and charged forward again.

Each time they collided, he was knocked flying. Each time he was knocked flying, he rose to his feet. And each time, the tall man continued to berate him.

Ning watched this scene from afar, aboard his boat. He could tell that the man and the youth looked similar; most likely, they were father and son. This scene caused Ning to think of how his own father, Ji Yichuan, had taught him how to use the sword all those years ago. Compared to the tall man, however, Ning's father's sword-arts were slightly superior.

Still...in terms of actual power, this man wasn't any weaker than Ning's father had been. This was because this man had already reached the Zifu level. His only weakness was that his sword-arts were a bit weaker than Yichuan's had been.

"This is quite an ordinary little village, but this man is a Zifu Disciple. It seems he's brought his son here to live in seclusion," Ning mused.

"If..."

"If Father was still alive...if I could still train in the sword alongside Father...how wonderful it would be."

Suddenly, Ning rose to his feet.

"Manorlord!" Ninefangs immediately called out.

Ning took a single step forward.

Whoosh.

He instantly appeared next to the tall man and the youth.

.....

Bu Feng stared in astonishment at the white-robed youth who had suddenly appeared. Although he had been training with his son, as a Zifu Disciple he had kept a continuous watch on the surrounding area. He had seen long ago that a wooden boat had appeared a few kilometers away, drifting about on the river, and he had also noticed the white-robed youth who was seated on the boat, drinking wine, but...that youth had suddenly appeared before him in the blink of an eye.

“No spatial ripples. It wasn’t teleportation.” Although Bu Feng was merely a Zifu Disciple, he had come from a major school. “He relied simply on pure speed to instantly arrive here...and the wind around us is still very calm and gentle. Skill like this...not even Primal Daoists can accomplish it.”

“Who are you?” The mud-splattered youth looked towards Ning.

“Yun’er!” Bu Feng barked. The youth was instantly terrified, no longer daring to make a sound.

Ning, however, simply smiled towards the tall man. “Don’t panic. I’ve just come to compete with you in sword-arts.”

“Compete?” Bu Feng was completely flabbergasted. Was this a joke?

“Just come on,” Ning said.

Bu Feng didn’t dare to disobey. This person could probably wipe him out with a single finger! He immediately suppressed all of his other thoughts, focusing entirely on the sword.

“Be careful, then!” A heavy sword suddenly appeared in front of Bu Feng.

Ning reached out with his two hands, and a pair of longswords suddenly manifested in front of him. These longswords had been formed by Ning out of natural energy; at his level, any swords he casually created would be far tougher than Mortal-ranked swords.

Upon seeing this, Bu Feng felt even more stunned and terrified. “What the hell is this senior playing at?” But he didn’t dare to hesitate at all. He immediately activated his Zifu-level ki, sending his heavy sword howling forward like a streak of light as he stabbed towards Ning.

Clang!

Ning’s twin swords instantly seemed to transform into flowing water as the heavy sword came stabbing towards him. He blocked multiple times in succession, but was still knocked flying backwards. In fact, after he landed on the ground, he actually staggered back a few steps.

“Father seems to be very afraid of this white-robed man, but why is it that he seems so weak?” The mud-splattered youth was puzzled.

“How can this be?!” Bu Feng, however, couldn’t even believe it.

As for Ning, he softly mused to himself, “It seems as though when using Houtian-level strength to execute my sword-arts...even I will find it very difficult to resist the magic treasures of a Zifu Disciple.” He hadn’t used any spells of silence, and so Zifu Disciple Bu Feng was able to hear what he said. Bu Feng couldn’t help but feel speechless; the man had merely used Houtian-level strength to resist the treasures of a Zifu Disciple?

Houtian, Xiantian, Zifu.

The gap between each level was enormous.

“Continue,” Ning instructed.

Bu Feng didn’t dare to disobey. He immediately launched yet another attack. His heavy sword, controlled by his Zifu-level ki, attacked with absolutely savagery. However, although Ning’s sword-arts seemed simple, they went straight to the essence of the sword. In truth, Ning would be able to manifest swordforce from his longswords with but a thought, but if he did that, there was no way this fight could continue. Thus, Ning forcibly kept all of his power suppressed, ensuring that his strength would be no more than that of a Houtian-level expert. This naturally meant that his even the speed of his sword had dropped drastically.

His sword was slow and weak; he had to completely rely on his sword-

arts in order to block.

Fortunately, his foe was merely a Zifu Disciple, and Ning's own understanding of the sword was far greater than his foe's.

"I didn't expect that this sudden whim of mine would have actually..." Ning had never experienced something like this before. He kept himself at a Houtian's strength, with his foe's heavy sword completely eclipsing Ning's swords in both speed and power. The end result was that Ning was forced to use every single scrap of skill and talent he had in order to defend.

He had a feeling...that he was improving.

He had found the right path! Through this path, he might be able to break through this bottleneck and reach an even higher level of sword-arts.

"How powerful. How can sword-arts be this marvelous, this miraculous? T-this...this is impossible." Bu Feng frantically unleashed all the most powerful sword-arts he had, and in fact he even began to use some of the rare, unique flying sword techniques he had learned. That way, the mysterious white-robed youth in front of him would reveal even more sword-arts for him to see.

The sword-arts of this white-robed youth had completely broadened his horizons. It was as though an entire new universe had appeared before him. He discovered, for the first time...that the sword could be used in manners like this!

It was precisely because Ning continued to use a mere Houtian's speed and strength that a Zifu Disciple like Bu Feng was able to see all these things clearly. However, although he was able to see it clearly, he still felt that it was all unspeakably arcane. Even the simplest of sword-stances caused Bu Feng to feel befuddled, no matter how hard he worked to comprehend it as he continued to unleash more attacks.

And yet, despite that...he could sense that his own insights into the sword were rising nonstop.

“Karmic luck. A tremendous stroke of karmic luck.”

“I, Bu Feng, was forced to flee with my son...but I actually ended up stumbling into such a tremendous stroke of karmic luck. The Dao of the Sword...I can embark upon the Dao of the Sword. I can reach a higher level of understanding, and I’ll be able to quickly become a Wanxiang Adept or even a Primal Daoist. By then, I’ll be able to go back. I’ll rescue my woman. I’ll...” Bu Feng’s heart was filled with wild joy...but he then immediately suppressed all other thoughts.

He focused all of his efforts on attacking Ning, while also doing his very best to memorize some of Ning’s sword-stances. Although these were all techniques which Ning casually came up with and displayed on the spot, to Bu Feng these stances were like a pegasus soaring through the skies in a bold, unconstrained manner. Every single technique was incomparably exquisite.

Ning was a peerless genius of the Dao of the Sword who had long ago mastered it. Right now, his foundation was the [Five Treasures] sword-art, a sword-art which surpassed the limits of the Heavenly Daos themselves. For someone who was studying the art of the sword, even the tiniest part of Ning’s insight was enough to give that person limitless benefits.

“Perhaps...perhaps this is the true essence of the sword. Forget about heartforce...forget about swordforce...forget about all outside sources of power and strength...only then can you truly find what the essence of the sword truly is. The [Five Treasures] sword-art is something which truly guides one towards the very essence of the sword itself. Yes...from today onwards, I shall roam the Three Realms, competing against countless people with the sword.” As a ray of clarity suddenly shone down upon Ning, Ning immediately came to his decision.

Chapter 38: Sword-Training Throughout the Realms

Bu Feng and Ji Ning battled for a full day and night. Empyrean God Ninefangs used a technique to completely separate this area from the outside world, ensuring that the commoners in the village wouldn't be able to see the battle. The only ones that could see were Ninefangs and the mud-splattered youth.

Huff. Huff. Huff. Bu Feng's face was turning pale as he panted.

He had been working hard to unleash as much power as he could. The ki in his Zifu region had long ago been used up, and so he had been using spirit-pills to replenish it. Finally, the last of his spirit-pills was gone, causing him to mentally panic. He knew very well that spirit-pills weren't worth a damn, compared to this chance to spar against this mysterious figure. This was a tremendous opportunity for him, and he wanted to make use of it to fight for a bit longer.

"Alright. You can stop now," Ning said. He could sense that his opponent's attacks had grown quite weak; the man was clearly out of ki.

Bu Feng had no choice but to stop.

"Here are some spirit-pills for you to replenish your ki with." Ning tossed a bottle of spirit-pills to him. Bu Feng hurriedly accepted the bottle, and as he took a look inside, he was instantly shocked and overjoyed.

Good heavens...not even Primal Daoists would be able to produce as many pills as this! What he didn't realize was that this was something Ning had acquired when he had slaughtered countless Immortals and Fiendgods during the Realmwar. Back then, every single White-Faced Flood Dragon he had slain contained a hundred thousand Loose Immortals, each of who had been carrying a large amount of Immortal pills with them as they fought. Ning had simply pulled out a random bottle, one which belonged to a Loose Immortal. To a puny Zifu Disciple like Bu Feng, however, this was something that utterly shocked and

overwhelmed him with joy.

“Senior, I can keep fighting,” Bu Feng said hurriedly.

“I’ve had enough,” Ning said with a laugh. “Ninefangs, let’s go.”

“Yes, Manorlord,” Ninefangs said respectfully.

Whoosh. The white-robed youth and the bald old servant disappeared into thin air.

“B-but...” Bu Feng was incredibly agitated. This bottle of pills was probably comparable in value to the entire fortune of an average Primal Daoist. This would give him the resources he needed, and the mysterious, profound sword-stances he had managed to memorize would serve as lamp-posts that would guide him on his Immortal path! He would be able to walk much farther along his path, and would be able to make his dreams a reality.

“Father?” The mud-splattered youth looked at Bu Feng.

“Let’s go home, right away!” Bu Feng said hurriedly. He immediately pulled his son back into their home within the village. He wanted to immediately and fully memorize and record the many sword-arts he had seen during the battle, for fear that he might forget them.

In the days to come, Bu Feng continued to teach his son sword-play. Eventually, he would manage to gain a basic level of insight into the Grand Dao of the Sword. Sixteen years later, when Bu Feng returned to his former school, he was already an expert of the Dao of the Sword.

Atop a wooden boat within the river.

“Manorlord, the techniques you put on display came from the [Five Treasures] sword-art, a technique that surpasses the Heavenly Daos which was created by the number one Sword Immortal in the history of the Three Realms. Learning even the tiniest little morsel of that sword-art represents a tremendous stroke of karmic luck for that Zifu Disciple,” Ninefangs said. He had personally witnessed the mighty power of the [Five Treasures] sword-art. Generally speaking, not even Celestial Immortals could endure seeing the power and majesty contained within the full

sword-art. As for a few scattered techniques and stances...even if they saw it, they wouldn't be able to understand it.

Ning had personally put the sword-art on display, and had sparred with Bu Feng for a long period of time, which was why Bu Feng had managed to understand how truly formidable these sword-stances truly were. Naturally, it had been much easier for him to understand them than others.

"I gained some insights of my own," Ning chuckled.

In truth, after spending just an hour sparring against Bu Feng, Ning had already been able to completely understand and defeat all of Bu Feng's stances. The reason why Ning had spent a full day and night fighting against him was because he was testing new ideas and gaining new insights.

"Three thousand kilometers from here, there's a Zifu Disciple who is quite skilled in longsword techniques. Come." Ning's heartforce had already discovered a Zifu Disciple three thousand kilometers away who was training in quite an extraordinary flying sword technique.

.....

Atop a distant mountain peak. A scarred, gray-robed woman was standing here, controlling a flying sword from afar.

Suddenly, a white-robed youth and an old, bald servant appeared next to her out of thin air.

"Eh?" The scarred woman was badly shocked, but she hurriedly said respectfully, "Respectful greetings to you, senior."

"Use your flying sword to attack me at full force," the white-robed youth said.

"Uh?" The scarred woman was stunned. This mysterious figure was very strange! Still, she didn't dare to refuse, and so she immediately began to attack.

.....

Time flowed on, day after day.

The Seamless Gate's Godking continued to maintain a close watch over Ning, taking a look at him every so often. After half a month of doing so, the Godking finally ran out of patience. To him, Ji Ning wasn't a true threat, after all, just a troublemaker. The truly dangerous figures in the Three Realms were the True Gods and Daofathers of the Nuwa Alliance, as well as the many preparations they were making in secret for the Endwar.

"Ji Ning is actually dueling some laughably weak cultivators in order to train in the sword? What a joke. Even if he gains any insights, how strong could they be?" The Godking could no longer be bothered to pay any more attention.

Day after day. Month after month. Year after year...

Ning roamed the Three Realms. Although low-level Zifu Disciples and Wanxiang Adepts were weak, different places had different battle styles. In the trillion minor worlds in particular, the differences in combat styles were particularly noticeable. In fact, there were certain sword-art techniques which caused even Ning to feel tongue-tied and speechless.

Ning sparred against countless combatants and against countless styles. He never used any of his Immortal energy, his heartforce, his swordforce, or anything else. He simply relied on his Houtian-level strength to battle against the Zifu Disciples, and on Xiantian-level strength to battle against the Wanxiang Adepts.

This caused Ning to gain quite a few more insights into the [Five Treasures] sword-art. His many clones were all focused on meditating and visualizing new techniques, extracting the essence of his insights from battle.

Nine years later.

Ning was within a beautifully scenic minor world. This minor world was in a very remote region, but occasionally Immortals and Fiendgods of the Three Realms would pass by here, as did Ning. However, this was a place with many people; in terms of population size, it was comparable to

Ning's previous home of 'Earth'. Here, experts were divided into several different ranks; Mortal-rank, Earth-rank, Heaven-rank, and the Legend-rank. In truth, this was essentially equivalent to the Houtian, Xiantian, Zifu, and Wanxiang levels.

The energy cultivation methods in this world were extremely coarse. Anyone who was able to reach the 'Legend' level was actually comparable to the Primal Daoists of the Grand Xia in terms of their insights into the Dao. In fact, some Legends had even mastered a complete Dao. It was precisely because they had such deep insights into the Dao that they were able to forcibly train their way into the Wanxiang level, despite having such terrible energy cultivation methods.

Swordforge Mountain Villa. This was viewed as a sacred place within this minor world.

The lord of the Swordforge Mountain Villa was given the exalted title of Sword Saint! He was a Legend, and the entire world only held three Legends. Sword Saint, however, was publicly acknowledged as the most powerful of the three.

"Master."

Thirteen disciples were standing there respectfully. In front of them was a middle-aged man dressed in simple clothes who was seated in the lotus position. This middle-aged man was Sword Saint! The number one expert of the world!

These thirteen disciples were thirteen of the 'Fifteen Celestial Swords' of Sword Saint's school.

"Number six, you first," Sword Saint said.

"Yes, Master," the sixth disciple said respectfully.

Right at this moment...

Whoosh.

A white-robed youth and an old, bald man suddenly appeared next to them. Because Sword Saint was seated facing them, he was the first to see

them appear out of nowhere. His face instantly changed. “How could they have suddenly appeared here without me detecting them?”

Upon seeing the look on Sword Saint’s face, the thirteen disciples all followed his gaze. They also saw the youth and the old servant, and they too were startled. However, although they were startled, they didn’t panic. This was because everyone knew that Sword Saint was the undisputed number one expert in the world. Still, it was true that there were some people who were especially skilled in stealth.

The sixth disciple instantly barked, “This is a restricted area of the Swordforge Mountain Village. Who are you two! Report your names!”

The white-robed youth, however, just looked towards Sword Saint. “I heard that you are the strongest person in this world, and that your sword-arts are the best. Use your sword and display your strongest sword-arts.”

“Didn’t you hea-” The thirteen disciples all grew angry...but Ninefangs just glanced at them, then said softly, “Sleep.”

Thud. Thud. Thud.

The thirteen disciples all collapsed, having fallen asleep.

This scene completely stunned Sword Saint. The majority of his thirteen disciples were all at the Heaven-rank, but they were all actually sent into a deep slumber in an instant? An ability like this was utterly inconceivable.

“Ugh. If this was a major world, things wouldn’t be such a pain.” Ning shook his head, then released his aura. Instantly, Sword Saint felt as though he was nothing more than an ant drowning within a sea that was vaster than the heavens themselves. In fact, he could sense that his body couldn’t even move in the presence of this boundless aura of might.

Moments later, Ning finally retracted his aura.

If he didn’t reveal a bit of his power, most likely this ‘Sword Saint’, who had long ago become accustomed to being the ‘number one in the world’, wouldn’t be able to realize what the situation was in a short period of time. If they were in a major world, the man most likely would’ve immediately begin to respectfully address Ning as ‘senior’.

“Attack,” Ning commanded.

“Senior, your power is truly tremendous. I, Woodclear, have roamed the world for a hundred years. I thought that I was the number one expert in existence, but now I see that I was nothing more than a frog in a well gazing towards the heavens.” Sword Saint looked towards Ning. “Over the course of my many years, I have developed a technique known as the Ninety-Nine Swordforged Swords. Please have a look.”

Although he knew the difference in power between them, his many years of pride at being the ‘best in the world’ compelled him to want to prove himself through his sword-arts.

A short while later.

“How can this be...”

“But...”

He was completely stunned and speechless.

“He’s able to block my sword-arts while merely using Earth-ranked strength and speed?” Sword Saint was truly dazed. He was proudest of his accomplishments in sword-arts, but compared with the youth before him...this youth used seemingly-simple stances, but no matter how hard Sword Saint tried, he simply couldn’t understand or comprehend any of them. Still, he was unconsciously inspired in many ways by this battle, and in the short period of time they sparred, he had already come up with several different sword-arts in his mind, all of which were far more powerful than the ‘Ninety-Nine Swordforged Swords’ he had spent so many years working on.”

“Although this ‘Sword Saint’ is from a minor world, he’s really quite strong. He’s mastered an ordinary Dao, and he’s even gained a basic level of insight into the Grand Dao of the Sword.”

“Of the Wanxiang Adepts I’ve dueled, this is the one with the best sword-arts thus far.”

Ning was very cautious. He continued to use Xiantian-level strength against Wanxiang Adepts, but he naturally was beginning to choose

increasingly powerful Wanxiang Adepts to fight against. This was the first time that he had fought against a Wanxiang Adept who had already gained insight into a Grand Dao.

Whoosh. Whoosh. Ning's sword-arts were like a black hole, devouring any and all attacks which Sword Saint attempted to unleash, no matter how berserk they were.

"Finally...my defensive sword-art is beginning to take embryonic form." Ning felt joy in his heart. Over the past few years of dueling, he had gained an even deeper understanding of the sword. In fact, he began to have a vague idea of the path that he would take in the future, and the outlines of a sword-art had begun to take shape in his heart. Ning could sense that this sword-art would have a total of five different stances.

But of course, he hadn't developed any of the five senses yet. Today, however, as he dueled against this 'Sword Saint', Ning finally began to gain an idea of how one of the five stances should be shaped.

Chapter 39: Soleheart

The Three Realms. The Celestial Realm. The Dao Palace in the eastern regions was extraordinarily lively on this day.

Many major powers had gathered here. Even Buddhas Tathagata and Amitabha had arrived to celebrate, along with many others.

“Congratulations, fellow Daoist.”

“Eastflower, you’ve finally made your breakthrough.”

“Congratulations!”

“Haha, Eastflower, you finally broke through. I’ve been waiting for this day since the Primordial Era.”

The Dao Palace was bustling with activity. The man of honor for this occasion was not Daoist Three Purities. Rather, it was someone who the Daoist Path had placed great expectations in...Patriarch Lu, Lu Dongbin. For some time now, Lu Dongbin had been journeying through the primordial chaos. Upon returning...everyone discovered that he had already broken through to reach the Daofather level. Thus, upon his return almost all the major powers had learned of Lu Dongbin’s breakthrough.

“Fuxi!”

“Fuxi, long time no see!”

The major powers all chatted amongst themselves in small groups. Some had come in person, while others had sent their clones or incarnations.

“Subhuti.”

“Fuxi.”

Subhuti and Fuxi ran into each other in the Dao Palace. Subhuti had come in person, while Fuxi had merely sent over a clone.

“Eastflower caused quite a stir when he returned from the primordial chaos. It seems he encountered quite the stroke of karmic luck,” Fuxi said

with a laugh. “And from what I saw...it seems as though Eastflower should have mastered the fifth level of taiji-force as well. Amazing, truly amazing.”

“He wished to merge the teachings of Buddhism and Daoism together... Eastflower truly is an ambitious man.” Subhuti sighed with emotion. “However...it was precisely because his ambitions were too great that, despite possessing deep insights in both his previous life as ‘Eastflower’ and his current life as ‘Lu Dongbin’, he remained unable to make the final breakthrough. This time, thanks to a lucky encounter in the primordial chaos, he was able to make a fortuitous breakthrough, merging Buddhism and Daoism into one, with the Taiji supporting him. Upon making this breakthrough...he has now become one of the top-tier Daofathers of the Three Realms. No wonder Three Purities, Carefree, and the others all viewed him with such favor.”

Fuxi nodded as well. Everyone felt quite moved.

True Gods and Daofathers could roughly be divided into three levels of power.

The first level of power was the level which ordinary True Gods and Daofathers were at. Most True Gods and Daofathers were on this level, and unless they made a qualitative, transformative breakthrough, they would find it very difficult to improve any further.

The second level was the level often described as the ‘top-tier’ level. The Five Monarchs of the human race, Daofather Carefree, Wargod Xingtian, and other extraordinarily powerful figures were considered to be on this level.

The third level was the ‘overlord’ level. This was the level the two leaders of Buddhism and Daoism were on, along with the three mighty Human Emperors.

In truth, it was certain that the likes of Subhuti, Old Man Yuan, and Houyi were significantly more powerful than the likes of Wargod Xingtian. Most people usually viewed them as being very close to the ‘overlord’ level, but because their exact power level was a mystery, it was hard to say

if they had reached the 'overlord' level or not.

Lu Dongbin had managed to combine his cultivation in both Buddhism and Daoism, and his taiji-force had reached the fifth level. He definitely had reached the top-tier Daofather level of power!

There had been others who had made such powerful breakthroughs in the past. Xingtian was another example, as was Houyi, whose breakthrough was even more ridiculous. Youdu was another example. As an Empyrean God, he had trained in the [Twelve Heavens Fiendgod] and reached the second level, and so he had twelve clones that were all equal in strength to his true body. After he broke through to become a True God, he had combined his twelve bodies and also become a top-tier Daofather.

But of course, what the Nuwa Alliance had, the Seamless Alliance also had.

"That disciple of yours has formidable heartforce," Fuxi said. "If he can break through to the fifth stage of heartforce, he'll instantly have the power of a top-tier Daofather as well."

"It's not that easy. Eastflower only succeeded because he's been building up a foundation for countless years. Honestly, if it wasn't because he was simultaneously training in so many things at once, he probably would've become a Daofather long ago. Eastflower is simply too ambitious, which is why it took him this long to make his breakthrough." Subhuti shook his head. "As for Ji Ning, he hasn't trained for long enough. It's far too difficult for anyone to reach the fifth stage of heartforce. To be honest, I've always felt that his talent lay more in the sword than in anything else. To this very day, I feel that way. Compared to the Dao of the Sword, heartforce is too ephemeral and formless a path."

Fuxi nodded in agreement. "How's he doing in his Dao of the Sword?"

"He's still building up his experiences," Subhuti said.

"Oh, right. Here's the formation I promised Ji Ning." Fuxi waved his hand, producing a bamboo scroll. "I brought it along with me to give to you."

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The Seamless Gate was naturally aware of Lu Dongbin's breakthrough. All they could do, however, was gnash their teeth in silence.

The Nuwa Alliance had gained yet another powerful ally! In truth, they had wanted to get rid of Lu Dongbin long ago, but he was the True Immortal which the Daoist Path cared about the most. Everyone knew that given Lu Dongbin's cultivation path, he would become incredible as soon as he made that final breakthrough, and so the Daoist Path had treated them as a precious treasure. In addition, Lu Dongbin hadn't been as suicidal as Ning, and so the Seamless Gate had never had the chance to do anything to him.

"For him to make his breakthrough just as the storm arrives...Lu Dongbin is going to be a threat. Still...in the end, victory will be decided in the Endwar." The Godking was absolutely furious, but on the whole was still calm and level-headed about it.

In this war between the two alliances, the addition of a single top-tier Daofather was something they could still handle. If, however, an overlord-level Daofather was to appear within the Daoist Path...he really would go crazy with shock and rage.

As for Ji Ning?

The Godking had all but forgotten about Ji Ning by now. Based on Ji Ning's current actions, it seemed as though Ning was completely focused on training in swordplay and was no longer going to ambush the Seamless Gate. "Ji Ning has finally wised up."

.....

The news that a new Daofather had been born was mainly circulated amongst the major powers themselves. Very, very few Empyrean Gods and True Immortals knew of this matter. Because Ning was completely focused on his training with the sword, Subhuti didn't tell him about this matter. In fact, he wasn't even in a rush to give Fuxi's formation to Ning. "It'll be easy for him to learn this formation. This disciple of mine is currently wandering the Three Realms, training in the sword like a

madman. It's best if I don't bother him for now. After he's completed his training, I'll give it to him."

Subhuti's judgment was quite accurate.

Ning had indeed entered a berserk state. When he had mastered the Dao of the Sword, he had just reached the first stage of swordforce. Upon reaching the second stage of swordforce, a new world had opened up before his eyes. And so, Ning wandered the Three Realms, constantly training and competing against others in swordplay. He began to gain an increasingly clear picture of the path he had to take. As for all the insights he gained, he merged all of them into those five stances he had visualized.

As Ning saw it...

"The essence of all sword-stances in the world, including those of the [Five Treasures], can be merged into these five stances."

"This sword-art that I, Ji Ning, will create...let it be called the [Brightmoon] sword-art. In the many years to come, I will spend much of my time constantly improving and perfecting these five stances."

This was what Ning's idea, for these five sword-stances to encompass all the mysteries of swordplay which the Three Realms contained.

In truth, sword-arts were quite simple when broken down. The most fundamental sword-stances were to chop, pierce, scrape, sweep, break, tap, cleave, support, intercept, twist, lift, draw, and sheath. Although they were seemingly simple...like the Dao itself, these simple concepts gave birth to countless different things, and were capable of transforming into infinitely powerful sword-arts.

Based on his own experiences, Ning had come up with five all-encompassing stances. Strictly speaking, these five stances represented five different types of sword-intent; what mattered the most was the intent, not the actual technique.

The fifteenth year of Ning's training with the sword.

"Careful!" A Primal-level Fiendgod roared as he charged towards Ning.

Ning was using Zifu-level strength to fight back with a sword in each hand. When his sword struck out, it was like a black hole had been created, draining and weakening his opponent's massive strength. No matter how fast the opponent attacked, he remained unable to escape.

Bang!

In fact, the Fiendgod's own power was beginning to work against him. He couldn't help but stagger back by two steps.

"The five stances of the bright moon...I didn't expect that the first one to take form would be this one. I shall call it 'Soleheart'." Ning nodded slowly.

The [Brightmoon] sword-art.

He had named it after his daughter. His decision to do so reflected the fact that to Ning, she was that which he had to protect above all others!

The 'Soleheart stance' of the five stances of the bright moon was a sword-art that was meant for defending in a one-on-one battle. It represented the most profound insights Ning had gained in defensive sword-arts. When his sword struck out, it was as though a black hole had formed that would absorb and trap the enemy's strength. But of course, this sword-art was still very crude and unfinished...but it was still the most powerful sword-art which Ning currently possessed.

In this moment...

Ning silently and soundlessly reached the third stage of swordforce. However, Ning actually didn't care too much about that. The only thing in his heart right now was his [Brightmoon] sword-art. This sword-art represented the crystallization of all his blood, sweat, and effort. This would be the true foundation of his sword-arts in the future.

Only after creating all five sword-stances would Ning rest.

"Eh? I've finally subdued that True Immortal Winterpeak." Ning suddenly cracked a smile.

.....

Within an ice-locked stone stele that was located deep within a gorge of an icy star that was within the infinite primordial chaos.

Prisonworld 17.

Eight lotus petals were high in the sky, facing the ground as they continued to unleash eight streams of truefire. The streams of truefire completely filled the ground beneath the lotus petals, blazing away at a bowl-shaped treasure.

A white-robed youth was located outside the restrictive formation, eyes closed as he continued to meditate on his sword-arts. Every so often, he would add in a little bit more energy to keep the treasure active.

Although his opponent was 'only' a Pure Yang True Immortal, this sort of top-tier True Immortal was comparable to the Daofathers of the Three Realms! Once he hide himself under the bowl-shaped magic treasure and began to fill it with his energy to defend against the eight blazing streams of truefire...he had been able to hold on for fifteen full years.

"I-I...admit defeat." The embarrassed, enraged, and resentful voice of True Immortal Winterpeak finally rang out from underneath the bowl-shaped treasure. His energy and his pills had all been used up. He would at most be able to endure for another three days.

Chapter 40: Raking It In

Ji Ning waved his hand, and the eight downward-facing petals instantly withdrew their streams of truefire. The eight petals then shrank in size and flew back into Ning's hands.

"Heh, as the saying goes, it looks like you 'wouldn't shed tears until you saw your coffin'. You knew that you were eventually going to die if you fought against me, but you still just had to fight against me until now." Still, Ning had to sigh at how strong his foe was. Ning had eight types of truefire to rely on, while the enemy had to actively control a magic treasure to defend; this True Immortal was using up far more energy than him, but thanks to his Daofather-equivalent level of power, he had been able to survive for fifteen years!

From this, one could see how vast a gulf in power there lay between Ning and a Daofather. If it wasn't for the fact that this person was imprisoned, there was no way Ning could've forced him to bow his head.

Whoosh. The bowl-shaped magic treasure disappeared, and True Immortal Winterpeak reappeared. A hint of anger and humiliation was in his eyes as he stared at Ning. "I admit defeat. I...I'm willing...to serve..."

Anger.

Humiliation.

All sorts of complicated emotions filled his mind. For him to prostrate himself before Ji Ning was like having Ji Ning prostrate himself before a Celestial Immortal! Experts had their own pride and arrogance. Fortunately, he had been imprisoned here for many chaos cycles, which had whittled it away a bit; otherwise, he would probably would've chosen to die rather than to bow his head. Even the current-him had spent fifteen years resisting before submitting after realizing that he had already reached the end of the line.

"There's no need to feel so upset," Ning said. "I'm unable to allow you to leave your prison cell, and so you'll continue to live here as before."

Winterpeak knew that Ning was trying to 'console' him and make him more pliable and less resistant. He said calmly, "What do you wish for me to do? Do you want magic treasures? Or to ask me certain questions? I can give you any treasures you desire; imprisoned here, they are of no use to me anyways."

"I need you to not resist me whatsoever. Open up your soul to me. Let me see your memories," Ning said.

"You..." Winterpeak's face completely changed. "Overseer, don't go too far."

"It's a mere memory search," Ning said.

Winterpeak ground his teeth as he stared at Ning. "Impossible! I can give you all of my magic treasures, but a soulscouring...impossible!"

To completely open up his soul meant that this person would know everything about him. He wouldn't be able to fight back against a Chaos Immortal or World God who wished to do this to him, but this person was far weaker than he was. To completely expose himself in such a manner to a weakling? An expert like Winterpeak truly couldn't accept it.

"To you, I'm nothing more than an outsider," Ning said. "Those private memories of yours are useless to me."

Winterpeak shut his eyes. Memories and scenes began to flash through his mind.

"Junior apprentice-brother."

"Grandfather."

"Disciple."

He would never be able to forget these people. These were the most important people in his life.

Perhaps the Pangaea chaos-kingdom had truly been destroyed, but even so, perhaps some of the important people in his life were still alive. He wanted to go see them, go search for them.

"Fine." Winterpeak opened his eyes. He looked coldly at Ning. "I accept..."

but I imagine you wouldn't dare to come inside and soulscour me."

"Haha..." Ning chuckled, then immediately stretched out his arm.

Whoosh! His arm instantly expanded to become hundreds of kilometers long, stretching out to land on Winterpeak's head.

"Coward," Winterpeak sneered. "Even after training in the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods], you are still so cowardly."

"If a prisoner like you was to suddenly wipe out one of my clones in a desperation attack...that really wouldn't be worth it for me." Ning stood there outside the formation, but his incredibly long arm had reached Winterpeak.

Even if his foe wanted to suddenly counter-attack, Ning could instantly and voluntarily separate that arm. The severing of an arm would only result in the loss of some divine power, and in fact some of the divine power from the arm would make it back to him.

"Come, then." Winterpeak shut his eyes, still seated in the lotus position.

Ning's hand was pressed against the top of Winterpeak's head. He began to invade the man's soul...and Winterpeak didn't fight back at all.

Instantly, magnificent scenes of an expert's rise to power began to appear before Ning. As a top-tier True Immortal, Winterpeak's life experiences had been far more exciting than those of the Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals, and his status had been much higher as well.

A full day and a night passed before Ning withdrew his hand. He closed his eyes in thought.

"It seems...there really is no hope of gaining a top-tier Jindan." Ning sighed to himself.

Although he had expected this, after searching through Winterpeak's memories Ning became certain of it. To form a first-class Jindan, one of the prerequisites was that a Chaos Immortal had to be by your side, assisting you. In addition, in Pangaea the technique of forming a first-class Jindan was only known to the three World-level experts! Not even Elder

Gods or Ancestral Immortals were qualified to learn this technique.

Second-class Jindans...there were quite a few who knew the technique for this, including True Gods and True Immortals. Winterpeak, however, was not one of them.

This made sense. The Jindan-creation techniques were only needed by mortals who wanted to train to become Celestial Immortals! Ji Ning, for example, had long ago become a Pure Yang True Immortal; these techniques really were of no use to him. The reason why Ning had searched for more information about them was so that he would be able to transmit them to Brightmoon and the others, assuming they all survived this great storm.

“And there truly are very few ways of upgrading a True Immortal’s Jindan.” Ning shook his head. A Jindan upgrade method was what Ning truly want. However...

In truth, these upgrade methods were also fairly valuable as well. This was because there were some Immortals in backwater regions who were incredibly talented, but who had already become Celestial Immortals or True Immortals using inferior methods. The various powers in the Pangaea chaos-kingdom would often recruit them, then work with them to upgrade their Jindans. Still, since even the best techniques only allowed them to upgrade the Jindans to the second tier, they weren’t THAT valuable.

Almost all the True Gods and True Immortals imprisoned here possessed the most elite level of power at their rank. They had incredibly high statuses, and so there was a chance that some of them knew these techniques. The chances that an Elder God or an Ancestral Immortal knew these techniques were even higher, but alas there was nothing Ning could do to any of them.

“Let’s take it slow. If I can’t find it from one True Immortal, I’ll go find a second True God or True Immortal. Ten...a hundred...I’ll just keep searching. Eventually, I’ll definitely succeed.” Ning then looked towards Winterpeak.

“Did you find what you wanted?” Winterpeak looked at Ning.

“Give me your ‘Flashing Skystars’,” Ning said.

Winterpeak ground his teeth. “You’ve already soulsoured me. Now, you want my Protocosmic spirit-treasure?”

“Hand it over,” Ning said.

“Hmph.” Winterpeak truly didn’t want to give it up, but he waved his hand. Instantly, a large amount of eight-cornered, deep-blue stars appeared in midair. There were a total of ninety-nine of them, and each of them seemed to contain the vast skies within them. This was the most important treasure which Winterpeak possessed, a Protocosmic spirit-treasure set.

“Take it.” Winterpeak dispersed his soul imprint on the treasure set, then tossed it towards Ning.

Ning’s hand expanded to become three hundred meters in size as he caught the various treasures.

“Here is a bottle of Immortal pills and a message talisman. The pills should be enough for you to stay alive for a period of time. If there’s anything urgent, you can shatter the talisman to summon me.” Ning waved his hand, tossing out these two items. Winterpeak immediately accepted them. He had completely used up his spirit-pills; this was exactly what he needed right now.

“Hmph.” Winterpeak gave the items a look, then snorted.

Ning knew that this person was feeling rather frustrated after having been soulsoured, then forced to hand over his most powerful treasure. Thus, Ning didn’t quibble about his attitude, instead transforming into a streak of light and departing.

“Judging from True Immortal Winterpeak’s memories, hierarchical stratification is extremely strict in Pangaea.” Ning flew forward atop a cloud, thinking to himself. “True Gods and True Immortals all generally use Protocosmic spirit-treasures, but only first-class True Immortals like Winterpeak are allowed to use entire sets of Protocosmic treasures, such

as these ninety-nine stars.”

“Most importantly of all, Pangaea actually has methods of producing even higher-class treasures.” Ning sighed in amazement.

In truth, it was actually quite simple to upgrade the power of a Protocosmic spirit-treasure. The method was to add more seals into the treasure itself!

His own Goldstar Beads of the Heavens, for example, had the nine chaos seals infused into them. This was a method strengthening spirit-treasures...but of course, you had to be capable of binding and infusing the necessary seals! Or, for another example, Daoist Three Purities had devised his Immortal Slaying Swords’ sword-diagrams using a total of seven seals. The more profound the seals were, the more powerful they would be.

This set of ‘Flashing Skystars’ also contained seals within them, and their power was extraordinary.

“However...this set of treasures isn’t a good fit for me,” Ning murmured softly to himself. “Still, the more treasures my side has, the stronger my side will become. I have to take away all the Protocosmic spirit-treasures these True Gods and True Immortals have.”

In the Three Realms, only some of the major powers had access to Chaos treasures...and the majority of them weren’t meant for combat! Thus, the absolute vast majority of major powers still used Protocosmic spirit-treasures in battle. Treasures like the Goldstar Beads of the Heavens were actually rather useless to most major powers. For Ning, of course, the beads were quite suitable, thanks to his powerful heartforce. To the others, however, treasures like the Flashing Skystars were more valuable, and the seals they contained inside them would delight quite a few major powers.

“I can trade this to the Emperors of Mankind for other treasures,” Ning mused. “Once I acquire a few more treasures, I’ll go and do a trade.”

The Emperors of Mankind, the Daoist Path, and the Buddhist Sangha all had vast treasuries. If he went with treasures of his own, he could trade the ones he didn’t need for ones which he could. But of course, the value

had to be equivalent.

Now that the storm had descended, all of the various headquarters of the Nuwa Alliance had placed the various items they didn't need within those treasuries, including many precious materials, Chaos ingredients, Immortal pills, and other things. That way, members of their alliance could trade for what they needed, making the alliance as a whole grow more powerful!

"I succeeded against a True Immortal. Now...let me see if I can deal with a True God." Ning's cloud flew straight towards a large mountain.

Atop the mountain, there was an emaciated, green-haired man seated in the lotus position. As soon as Ning landed, the man opened his eyes.

"What a True God!" Ning felt a bit breathless. The True Gods of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom were comparable to the True Gods of the Three Realms.

"Overseer?" The green-haired man's eyes were as sharp as a hawk's as he carefully scrutinized Ning. "What happened to Pangaea? Why have they sent you?"

"The chaos-kingdom of Pangaea has already been destroyed." Ning stood there atop the mountain as he spoke. "I am now in control of the entire prisonworld. You have two choices before you. The first is to resist me. The second is to submit to me. Just now, True Immortal Winterpeak submitted to me, and I have already acquired his Protocosmic spirit-treasure, the 'Flashing Skystars'."

Ning revealed the ninety-nine deep-blue eight-sided stars that were hovering above his hands.

The green-haired man narrowed his eyes. "Winterpeak, that useless piece of...he actually submitted to you?"

"Will you?" Ning looked at him calmly.

Chapter 41: Initial Successes in the Sword

The green-haired man let out a snort, then shut his eyes. He just sat there at the mountain top, not moving at all, as though he couldn't even be bothered to pay any attention to Ji Ning.

"If that's the case...I have no choice but to attack." Ning shook his head, then waved his hand. A streak of sword-light instantly slashed across the skies, leaving behind an enduring scar in the heavens. This sword-strike looked simple, but Ning had filled it with his fourth-stage heartforce.

It instantly traversed hundreds of kilometers and stabbed directly against the green-haired man.

Clang!

It was as though it had stabbed into a magic treasure. A ringing sound could be heard, but the green-haired man didn't even budge. He opened his eyes, glancing sideways at Ning, then smirked. "Is that all you have? I can just sit here, and you won't be able to harm me at all. Hurry up and beat it."

"Oh?" Ning shook his head and laughed. "Although the power of that sword-attack wasn't great, if you didn't resist its power at all, you would've been knocked flying. Don't tell me you didn't use up any of your divine power at all in order to ensure that you were able to sit there without budging an inch."

He knew exactly how powerful his sword-attack had been. A minor world like Earth probably would've been smashed into dust by it! Even if his enemy's body was as tough and unbreakable as a magic treasure, once a blow of such power landed it should've been knocked flying, just as a magic treasure would have been.

"Hmph. I have the body of a True God. You can't possibly damage it at all," the green-haired man said calmly. "I simply care about my image and my face. If it wasn't for that, I wouldn't use up any divine power at all, no matter how you strike me."

“None? What a joke! Any expert, no matter how formidable, has to use up divine power or Immortal energy to stay alive.” Ning smirked. “Ki Refiners use up their ki energy, while you need to use up your divine power. Why are you so emaciated? Isn’t it precisely because you are trying to conserve your divine power? Even if I don’t act against you...in a few chaos cycles, your divine power will be used up and you’ll still die.”

The green-haired man’s face turned ugly.

All living creatures had to use up energy to stay alive! The reason why Gods and Immortals could stay alive was because they were able to absorb the natural energy of Heaven and Earth. If, for example, they were trapped in primordial chaos without being able to draw upon either the energy of chaos or natural energy, they would die after their Immortal pills were all used up!

“If you want to stay alive, you have to continue to use up your divine power. Every attack I launch against you will speed that process up. Let’s see how long you can hang on for.” Ning stretched out his right hand. A lotus flower appeared within it, and then the eight petals of the flower quickly flew into the air above the mountain peak. They transformed to become three thousand meters in size, then began to swivel facing the ground. The petals bloomed open, releasing streaks of flame that roared downwards like divine dragons, completely covering the area where the green-haired man was.

The eight streams of truefire blazed around the green-haired man, but he was able to easily resist their power.

“Stop wasting your time and effort,” the green-haired man growled. “These flames can’t hurt me.”

“No rush. I have plenty of time.” Ning responded coldly, “Your divine power will be consumed quite quickly by my Eight Fires Qiankun World.”

The green-haired man had an ugly look on his face. His divine body was comparable to a Pure Yang artifact; in hardness, it was comparable to Ning’s own body, after he had mastered the complete [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]. Although this True God had access to an even better protective

ability, that divine ability required even greater resources, and so he hadn't been able to master it yet. Thus, his body was like a magic treasure, but even untouched magic treasures would eventually decay and break apart after the passage of multiple chaos cycles. This was why many of the Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals here had damaged-looking clothes. They only needed to use up a little bit of energy to repair them, but they weren't willing to do so.

Nothing could truly exist perpetually. Even chaosworlds would eventually decay and perish.

When Ning battled, he allowed people to strike his body with impunity, and it could be described as 'not using up divine power'. But in truth, everything used up energy and power. Even speaking used up power! However, the amount of power consumed was very tiny. At Ning's level, the enormous amount of energy he could draw from the natural world with a single breath was more than enough to render irrelevant the amount which he had lost!

"Shit. Shit!" The green-haired man's face was ugly. He had been imprisoned here for a long time. He had slowed down the rate at which he used up his divine power, allowing him to stay alive for a long period of time. However, the Eight Fires Qiankun World was capable of burning Empyrean Gods to death. Although True Gods wouldn't die, the amount of divine power they would be forced to consume to defend against it was very significant! By comparison, he was now using up his divine power at an explosively greater speed than before.

If he was in the outside world, he would be able to replenish his lost energy tenfold with but a single breath. But alas...here, there was no source of energy at all.

"Submit to me and you'll have a chance to leave this place in the future," Ning said calmly. "Continue to resist...hmp. Your only exit will be death."

"Damn. This treasure with fire inside it..." The green-haired man was both frustrated and nervous. "This Overseer can rely on these eight types of fire to attack me while using up very little energy, and he can go to the

outside world whenever he needs to in order to replenish his power. I, however, am stuck here. Who the hell came up with this treasure, anyhow? These eight types of fire are clearly quite weak, but when they are combined they actually become as powerful as this.”

Seeing that the green-haired man wasn't responding to him, Ning fell silent as well.

This was yet another who 'wouldn't shed tears until he saw his coffin'!

.....

“Hurry up and submit!”

Yet another clone of Ji Ning, in another part of the prisonworld, was standing in midair, surrounded by a bottle, a gourd, a bracelet, and three other types of magic treasures. These six magic treasures were releasing truefire, godwind, truewater, and other types of attacks. The world was filled with fire and water, and a dark wind howled forth. All of the attacks were aimed at a female True Immortal who was hiding behind the protection of a magic treasure.

“True Immortal Winterpeak has already surrendered. If you continue to waste my time like this...don't blame me for being merciless!” Ning barked.

The woman just gave Ning a cold glare.

As for Ning, he could only sigh to himself. He had two clones here; one was controlling the Eight Fires Qiankun World, while the other was carrying many other types of magic treasures. Clearly, the second clone's treasures couldn't compare to the Eight Fires Qiankun World, which was indeed a perfect treasure to use against these prisoners. It primarily relied on the truefire it contained, after all; there was very little need for Ning to use his own energy.

This process of sweeping through the people in the prisonworld was guaranteed to be a slow one. These True Gods and True Immortals were all comparable to the Daofathers of the Three Realms. Ning would have to use up an enormous amount of effort to deal with each and every one of

them.

Still, dealing with these prisoners didn't use up too much of his mental energy, and so his clones were all mainly focused on meditating on sword-arts.

.....

The thirty-second year of Ning roaming the Three Realms.

"Be careful, senior!" A Primal-level Fiendgod was wielding two massive warhammers in his hands. He bound through a forested region as he charged towards Ning, the trees around him all blasted apart and knocked down by his might. In fact, some were immediately reduced into dust!

The white-robed youth, Ji Ning, held two swords in his hand, and he moved at the speed of a Zifu-level Fiendgod. His sword-light was like a black hole, drawing a warhammer aside. And then, with another flash, the sword-light stabbed towards the Fiendgod.

Clang! A warhammer was able to block in time.

"That was close!" The Fiendgod was badly terrified. "This senior clearly isn't using much power, and his blows seem weak. But that sword just now...why was it so bizarrely fast? I was almost unable to block in time."

Ning, however, frowned. He then continued to battle against the Fiendgod.

Every so often, he'd launch that stab once more.

Ning's stabbing attack had far, far exceeded the mysteries that were contained in an ordinary mastery of the Dao of the Sword. This was a sword-art that contained some of the mysteries of the [Five Treasures] sword-art, which itself had exceeded the Heavenly Daos. Even when using Zifu-level strength, the power of the stab was enough to cause the Primal-level Fiendgod to feel uneasy and nervous.

SLASH!

Finally, a terrifyingly fast sword managed to lash out with enough speed that it stabbed straight through the forehead of the Fiendgod.

The terrifyingly fast speed brought a shocking penetrative power with it as well.

“Right. That’s the feeling!” Ning revealed a hint of a smile.

“Senior!” The Primal-level Fiendgod was completely stupefied. “This junior admits to being vastly inferior. Senior, your sword-arts are simply inconceivable. This junior has never even heard of such powerful sword-arts before.”

“Continue,” Ning instructed.

Slash! Slash! Slash!

Poor Fiendgod. He was repeatedly lacerated and stabbed over and over!

“This sword-stance...of the five stances, it looks the simplest, but it is the fastest and most direct sword-stance. It is the second stance to take form.” Ning nodded. “This sword-stance...let me be known as ‘Blood Drop’.”

The Blood Drop stance...the fastest, most savage, most penetrating sword-stance of the five.

.....

The thirty-sixth year of Ning training in the sword. Within a minor world.

“Go! Go! Go!” A violet-robed maiden was controlling a pair of azure and violet flying swords from afar, sending them streaking towards Ning as streaks of light.

Boom! Boom!

Ning had two swords in each hand. These two swords were both shockingly heavy. When Ning wielded it, he felt as though he was striking out with a hammer or a mace. When his two swords collided against the flying swords, two deep booming sounds could be heard as he smashed the flying swords back, knocking them far away.

“How can this be?! This senior clearly isn’t that strong; his power is merely at the Zifu-level. I’m a Primal Daoist. How could he have smashed back my flying swords with raw force?” The violet-robed maiden was

completely stunned.

“This third sword has finally taken form as well.” Ning revealed a smile. “This sword-stance shall be the ‘Heavenbreaker’ stance of my five stances.”

All magic treasures could change in weight. Even the most ordinary of Mortal-ranked or Earth-ranked treasures could, through the usage of certain seals, transform to weight ten thousand kilograms or become as light as a feather. As for Protocosmic spirit-treasures like the Goldstar Beads of the Heavens...they could be as heavy as a small star or as light as a bubble.

Of course, not even Ji Ning would be able to control the 3600 beads if he made all of them weigh as much as a small star. Thus, a weight that was a good fit would be the ‘best’ weight.

The Heavenbreaker stance involved changing the sword to make it heavier, then using that weight to strike! If a sword was ridiculously heavy, it would become very slow...but if a sword was too light, there would be limits on how fast it could be. To reach the fastest speed possible, one had to find the perfect weight for a particular cultivator, based on his or her actual strength.

The Heavenbreaker stance was very fast, but it also contained tremendous force. It was capable of splitting apart Heaven and Earth.

.....

The forty-third year of Ning training in the sword.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Countless divine needles, more than ten thousand in total, had completely surrounded Ning.

Ning was holding those two twin swords in his hands.

Two streaks of sword-light lit up. Instantly, two vortexes of water that were spinning in completely opposite directions appeared in midair. When the ten thousand-plus needles struck, they were completely blocked by these two curtains of water that were spinning in opposite directions.

“This stance shall be called Yin-Yang.” Ning nodded.

Yin-Yang stance...a defensive sword-stance to be used when faced with countless simultaneous attacks.

.....

The fifty-first year of Ning training in the sword.

“...What’s up with this senior? His strength and speed are both quite low, merely at the Zifu-level, but he’s able to simultaneously fight with us thirteen brothers at the same time.”

“He really is odd.”

“But he’s quite formidable. In close combat or in ranged combat, we are completely unable to harm him.”

Thirteen Primal Diremonsters had joined forces against Ning, each of them Fiendgod Body Refiners.

Ning still held those two swords in his hands.

Occasionally, the swords would transform into black holes; at other times, they would transform into vortexes of water that surrounded him. All attacks were blocked, and at the same time he continued to battle against the three Primal-level Diremonsters closest to him.

This attack went on for a full day and two full nights.

“Still not quite there yet.”

“No, that’s not it.”

Ning could sense that he was close to the critical component, and so he hadn’t stopped.

Suddenly...

Three strange sword-flashes suddenly appeared out of nowhere.

All three of the nearby Diremonsters had their heads severed apart. Although those heads quickly flew back and reconnected to their bodies, the thirteen Diremonsters were completely stunned. They had surrounded and attacked this man, but he was still able to sever the heads of three of

them, all Primal-level Diremonsters?

“Mmm. Finally. That’s more like it.” Ning grinned. “This sword-stance... let it be known as Shadowless.”

Shadowless stance...the strangest stance, and a very fast one. Its speed was second only to the Blood Drop stance, and it completely surpassed the speed of the other three. The Blood Drop stance, by comparison, was honorable and open, whereas this Shadowless stance was strange and unpredictable.

.....

A wooden boat was drifting about within a river.

Ning was seated within the boat, meditating. His old bald servant, Empyrean God Ninefangs, was quietly standing guard next to him.

“I’ve been training for fifty-one years with the sword. I used the [Five Treasures] as the foundation, coming up with five stances of my own, based on my insights into the Dao of the Sword. Finally, these five stances have all taken form.” Ning felt a joyful feeling in his heart. Years ago, a vast, broad world of the sword had opened up before him. Only today had he finally managed to truly separate that world into five major parts.

All sword-arts could be divided up as belonging to one of his five stances.

The [Five Treasures] sword-art had been infused by Ning into these five stances as well. As a result, all five of these sword-stances were incredibly fast!

“The five sword-stances of the [Brightmoon] sword-art...Soleheart, Yin-Yang, Blood Drop, Heavenbreaker, Shadowless.” Ning had a feeling that any of the five sword-stances, when trained to the utmost limit, would far surpass all other types of sword-art that existed in the Three Realms.

But of course, that would only happen if he was able to continuously improve upon them and perfect them. They were nothing more than rough outlines, right now.

“Disciple.” A spatial vortex suddenly appeared within the wooden boat, with Patriarch Subhuti emerging from within it.

Ning hurriedly rose to his feet. “Master.”

“Patriarch.” Empyrean God Ninefangs was shocked as well, and he immediately bowed with respect.

Chapter 42: The Humanworld of Yu the Great

“You succeeded?” Subhuti sat down in the lotus position, facing Ji Ning. “Sit.”

Ning sat down in the lotus position as well. Nodding, he said, “Still, it’s just an outline for now.”

“What’s the name of this sword-art?” Subhuti asked.

“The [Brightmoon] sword-art,” Ning replied.

Subhuti nodded. “The sword-art you created isn’t bad. It has a certain quality about it, as though a school can be founded around it. Although it’s still quite new and young, its future potential is limitless. Haha...the method you used to come up with this sword-art was quite amusing. You actually suppressed your own power to go spar against Zifu Disciples, Wanxiang Adepts, and Primal Daoists...and you actually succeeded in developing a set of sword-arts. Before you, all we would ever see was major powers of the Three Realms occasionally providing some guidance to young cultivators through sparring. There has never been anyone who actually sparred against them in earnest and thus developed a peerless sword-art.”

“I’m a bit embarrassed,” Ning said.

“I thought about it carefully, actually. Weak cultivators do indeed have slow, weak swords. When you suppressed yourself to make yourself even weaker to spar with them, you were forced to constantly ponder ways to improve your sword-arts, given the disparity in strength and speed.”

Subhuti nodded. “However...in the end, you won’t be able to accomplish great things solely by sparring against weaklings. Your future opponents won’t be as weak as them.”

Ning said, “Your disciple understands. I only competed against them for the sake of creating a rough outline for my sword-arts.”

When two experts competed, it was easier for both sides to see what

their strengths and weaknesses were. Ning had discarded swordforce, heartforce, Immortal energy, and all other sources of power in his quest to find a sword-art that belonged to him. Now that the rough outlines of the sword-art had taken shape, in the future he would compete against true experts. That would be how he would perfect his sword-arts.

“Haha, I have to say, you were quite patient.” Subhuti nodded. “Mm. It’s good that you understand this principle. Now, I’ve come here today because of Fuxi.”

Ning instantly felt a surge of joy. Fuxi? When he had offered up those seven mighty techniques, Fuxi had promised to create a special formation just for him. However, he had said that it would be done within ten years.

“You’ve been meditating on the sword all this time, and so I didn’t wish to disturb you.” Subhuti pulled out a bamboo scroll. “This was created just for you. It’s a formation that is very suited to you. Study it carefully.”

“Yes.” Ning reverently accepted the scroll, then sent his coresense into it. All the information regarding the formation was rapidly transmitted into his mind.

This was a formation that was far more complicated and profound than the Heaven Punisher Formation. It was based on some of the mysteries behind the divine body of the deceased alien invader, Rahu. When executed, the formation would allow for the creation of a Rahu-body! And so, this formation was known as the Rahu Formation.

The Rahu Formation had a total of three levels.

The first level allowed one to command 6000 Celestial Immortals and 360,000 Loose Immortals. This level alone was already comparable to the perfect Heaven Punisher; the wielder would have just barely reached the Daofather level.

The second level allowed one to command 30,000 Celestial Immortals and 2.1 million Loose Immortals. At this level, the Rahu’s strength and divine body would be comparable to that of an actual True God or Daofather.

The third level allowed one to command 90,000 Celestial Immortals and 8 million Loose Immortals. At this level, the Rahu would actually be a bit stronger than most True Gods and Daofathers. But of course, Ning himself had a lower level of insight into the Dao than True Gods and Daofathers had. Thus, if Ning was in command, the strengths of the formation would counteract Ning's weaknesses in the Dao...and in turn, that meant that Ning would be able to battle against actual True Gods and Daofathers without being at any disadvantage.

But of course, that was only if he could command and control the power of 90,000 Celestial Immortals and 8 million Loose Immortals!

This was incredibly difficult, a hundred times more difficult than controlling the perfect Heaven Punisher! Even amongst True Gods and Daofathers, there weren't many who could succeed.

"So many Loose Immortals and Celestial Immortals..." Ning was rather dazed. "I-I...how am I supposed to command so many?"

"Take it slow," Subhuti advised. "Oh, right. At present, you don't even have that many Loose Immortals and Celestial Immortals under your command."

Ning nodded.

"As Fuxi developed this formation for you, he also arranged for an Immortal army to be placed under your command," Subhuti said. "You can head to the Humanworld of Yu the Great and go speak with Daofather Hasbear. Fuxi has already notified Daofather Hasbear; if you go see him, you will be given an Immortal army of 90,000 Celestial Immortals and 8 million Loose Immortals."

"Aaaaa?!" Ning was shocked and delighted. Fuxi's gifts truly were extraordinary...but it made sense. Even Daofather Crimsonbright had nearly 1 million Celestial Immortals and countless Loose Immortals under his command, and he was considered one of the weaker Daofathers. The likes of the Five Monarchs had far, far more soldiers under their command.

As for the Humanworld of Yu the Great...that was the central

headquarters of the Primordial Imperial Clan! Yu the Great was also known as Xia Yu; he was the founder and ancestor of the Xia clan, also known as the imperial clan of the human race! His world was thus the place where the Primordial Imperial Clan was based in. This world, the Humanworld of Yu the Great, was essentially an enormous military base for the Primordial Imperial Clan, and so it possessed tremendous power.

To the Primordial Imperial Clan, Fuxi giving Ning an army of this size was like him giving away a single strand of hair from a yoke of nine oxen!

“Right...you still wish to act against the Seamless Gate, yes?” Subhuti looked at Ning. “Why haven’t you done anything for so long?”

“After I ambushed them last time, the Seamless Gate became incredibly careful. While I was roaming the Three Realms, they kept a continuous watch on me through coresense. Even if I did try to ambush them again, it would be hard for me to succeed,” Ning said.

Of course Ning wanted to attack them again! In truth, he felt very impatient...but he knew that being impatient would do him no good. If he made a single misstep, he would pay a calamitous price.

“Mm.” Subhuti nodded. “It seems you are still cool-headed. Good. Take it slow. To force the Seamless Gate to bow its head before you won’t be an easy task. Work hard on your sword-arts, especially the [Five Treasures] sword-art. If you can completely master the entire [Five Treasures], then you’ll be able to receive Fujū’s legacy. Fujū was always a secretive, mysterious man. I have no idea what he left behind. Both our side and the Seamless Gate has tried to find out, but we weren’t able to reach it at all. It seems that the only method really is for a Fiendgod Body Refiner to master the [Five Treasures] sword-art.”

Ning nodded. He, too, was curious as to what Daofather Fujū had left behind. Daofather Fujū’s death made no sense, after all...and it was as though he had actually arranged for everything to be taken care of perfectly.

A while later, Subhuti left. As for Ning, he first had Empyrean God Ninefangs return to the Starseizer world, then travelled by himself to the

main headquarters of the Primordial Imperial Clan...the Humanworld of Yu the Great.

Whoosh. Seated upon his Voidboat, Ning traversed through the void, heading towards the Humanworld.

By now, Ning wouldn't even be able to teleport if it wasn't for the Voidboat. This was because he had already completely forgotten everything he had learned regarding the Grand Dao of Qiankun, due to the effects of training in the [Five Treasures] sword-art.

"What an imposing aura it has." Standing atop his Voidboat, Ning stared at the distant, vast world.

As far as the eye could see, there were interconnected cities that were spread out throughout the world. Some of the cities were even levitating in midair! All of the cities were drawing in enormous amounts of natural energy, so much so that one could see with the naked eye a vortex of energy swirling around each city. Clearly, the number of Immortals within those cities was simply massive, resulting in a storm of energy that testified as to the stupendous level of consumption of natural energy here.

"After the Primordial Era ended, the Primordial Imperial Clan moved to this place. Now that the storm has arrived, this has become an enormous military camp." Ning sighed with emotion.

"So it's fellow Daoist Darknorth." A distant figure suddenly appeared via teleportation, then flew towards Ning's direction. It was a muscular, fur-clad man who had a bare chest. This particular expert of the Primordial Imperial Clan had gotten used to dressed in animal furs when he was young, and so even after he became a divinity, he continued to dress in this manner.

"Empyrean God Fuqu," Ning called out to him. This was the headquarters of the Primordial Imperial Clan; he didn't dare act rashly here. After appearing here, Ning had been waiting for someone to welcome him. Whenever anyone entered this world, the Primordial Imperial Clan would immediately know.

"I've already received Daofather Hasbear's command. Fellow Daoist

Darknorth, come. Let's go meet Daofather Hasbear," Empyrean God Fuqu said.

Ning nodded.

Daofather Hasbear...

He had quite a high level of status amongst the human race. Although he rarely engaged in battle, he was one of the truly ancient figures of the Primordial Imperial Clan. When Mother Nuwa had created the human race, Daofather Hasbear was one of the first humans who she had personally created. He had been born in an area which had wild bears, and so he was given the name 'Hasbear'. In that era, the human race had been incredibly weak and primitive, and so they had chosen names for themselves in a very casual manner. 1

Back then, Daofather Hasbear was an ordinary mortal, but he still founded a small tribe of his own, the Hasbear tribe. In fact, an incredible figure actually ended up emerging from Daofather Hasbear's tribe... Huangdi the Yellow Emperor, one of the Five Monarchs of the human race. The Yellow Emperor came from the Hasbear tribe, and after his rose to prominence, he actually unified the human race for a time. Hasbear thus supported the Yellow Emperor, allowing him to stabilize the world. 2

Whoooooosh. A wild wind howled, and the distant army banners fluttered in the wind.

There were citadels scattered everywhere, each of which had armies of Immortals and Fiendgods stationed within them. Some of these armies had existed since the Primordial Era, while some had recently been moved here from other major worlds.

The Humanworld of Yu the Great didn't just have many Immortal and Fiendgod soldiers; it also more than twenty True Gods and Daofathers who were permanently stationed here, with Daofather Hasbear being one of them.

"This is Daofather Hasbear's territory. These armies are all under Daofather Hasbear's command," Fuqu said with a chuckle. "Daofather Hasbear himself is located inside the largest city over there."

1. This comes from actual Chinese quasi-history; there was once a tribe named Youxiong, 'Has Bears', because the tribe was located in a region that had bears. This was the tribe that gave birth to a very, very important figure in Chinese history...
2. The Yellow Emperor is arguably one of the most important figures in Chinese history/mythology. There are many stories about him, but in short, he is regarded as the founder of Chinese civilization and the ancestor of all Chinese people. To this very day, Chinese people waxing poetic will refer to themselves as the 'descendants of Yan and Huang', with Yan being another famous Emperor.

Chapter 43: Years of Seclusion

Guided by Empyrean God Fuqu, Ji Ning was led before an ancient figure of the human race, Daofather Hasbear. Although Daofather Hasbear was as old as Suiren and also had very high status, he was even more low-key than Suiren. There were many stories in the Three Realms of the power of the Five Monarchs, but there were many Celestial Immortals who had never even heard of Daofather Hasbear.

“Daofather, Ji Ning has arrived,” Fuqu said respectfully.

“Ji Ning pays his respects to you, Daofather,” Ning said respectfully.

They were within an enormous, plainly adorned palace.

A muscular old man was seated on a prayer mat in the lotus position, dressed in simple animal furs. His beard and hair looked as hard and tough as iron, and he had the face of someone with an explosive temper. When he opened his eyes, however, a look of eternity could be seen within them. In fact, the ancient aura that emanated from him caused Ning to unconsciously calm down and feel peaceful.

As Daofather Hasbear looked towards Ning, a loving look slowly but naturally took form with his gaze.

“Good.” Daofather Hasbear smiled.

Mother Nuwa had created the human race. Hasbear was one of the first humans to be created, and he had watched as the human race had struggled, survived, and thrived. In his heart, he naturally felt very loving and protective towards every single dazzling human descendant he saw.

Although this was Ning’s first time meeting Daofather Hasbear, he couldn’t help but feel a natural veneration towards him.

“Fuxi has already spoken to me. This is a minor matter, and I’ve already made the arrangements.” Daofather Hasbear smiled as he looked at Ning. “It’s rare for our human race to produce someone so talented in heartforce. You were able to reach the fourth stage of heartforce despite having trained for less than a century; I want you to make sure you make

something of yourself. Before the Endwar comes, I want you to make a breakthrough to the fifth stage. Let the myriad races of the Three Realms know that our human race is capable of giving birth to a heartforce expert of the fifth stage!”

“I shall do my utmost,” Ning couldn’t help but say.

“Good. That’s the attitude I like to see. Defeat isn’t frightening; what’s frightening is not even having the courage to try.” Daofather Hasbear smiled and nodded. “Seize every moment to train. If you can become a True God or Daofather before the Endwar comes, our side will be all the stronger for it.”

“Yes.” Ning didn’t speak any modest words at all. In his heart, he truly desired to become a True God and a Daofather.

The Three Realms had far, far too many Empyrean Gods and True Immortals.

It must be understood that the primordial chaos had given birth to ten great Elder Gods, eighty-one mighty True Gods, and 108,000 Empyrean Gods! 108,000! Although many died during the countless wars of the Primordial Era, as well as in the war which destroyed Pangu’s Chaosworld, many others eventually trained to reach the Empyrean God and True Immortal level. The Seamless Alliance itself also had many Empyrean Gods and True Immortals within their ranks.

Thus, there were currently many at this level of power in the Three Realms. The addition of Ning, by himself, had almost no affect on the overall balance of power as a whole.

In the face of a massive army, a single person’s power wasn’t even worth talking about.

Only when one became a True God or a Daofather would one have the ability to have an impact on the Endwar!

“Master.” A short, muscular man with a greataxe on his back walked into the palace.

“Luoizou,” Daofather Hasbear said, “Give it to Ji Ning.”

The short, muscular man looked towards Ning, then produced a palm-sized city within his hands. He handed the miniature city towards Ning, then said, “Darknorth, I heard that you are skilled in commanding soldiers in a formation. Don’t let these Immortals down.”

“Don’t worry, Empyrean God Luozou,” Ning said.

During the Primordial Era, when the human race was still young and primitive, its cultivation methods were imperfect and flawed. They learned many of their techniques from Fiendgods, which was why many humans from the earliest days of the Primordial Era trained as Fiendgod Body Refiners. Later on, after Ki Refining techniques became better, more Celestial Immortals and True Immortals began to slowly appear.

“Go.” Daofather Hasbear looked towards Ning, a look of eagerness in his eyes.

Ning bowed respectfully, then departed.

The city had a total of 100,000 Celestial Immortals and 10 million Loose Immortals inside of it! Ning sent all of these Immortals into his own Starseizer world and made arrangements for them, then transmitted the basic components of the Rahu Formation to them. Most likely, the Celestial Immortals and Loose Immortals would only need half a year to master it, at which point they would be able to set up the formation.

Sword Immortal world. Five Treasured Peaks.

The five towering peaks pierced high into the clouds as always. Ning was floating atop a cloud, standing in front of the stone walls of the third mountain peak and reading the third chapter of the [Five Treasures] sword-art. During his previous fifty-one years of cultivation, Ning’s swordforce had reached and surpassed the third level, and he had also long ago mastered the complete second chapter.

In truth, when he had gone to meet Daofather Hasbear, he had done so with a sense of pressure weighing down upon him.

“We have to win the Endwar. We can’t lose. If we lose, the entire Nuwa Alliance will be annihilated, as will the entire human race.” Ning didn’t

even dare think about what would happen if they lost. Discarding those thoughts for now, he turned to carefully read through the third chapter of the [Five Treasures].

The [Five Treasures] sword-art was extraordinarily profound. This third chapter...it caused Ning to sigh in amazement. In fact, he couldn't help but unconsciously begin to include some of the essence of the third chapter into his own [Brightmoon] sword-art.

.....

Within a vast world of darkness.

The Godking, seated atop his towering throne, gently strummed the fingers of his left hand against the armrest. Tap. Tap. Tap. The tapping sounds echoed throughout the entire dark world.

"I didn't expect that Ji Ning would end up making a play like this. He actually gave up alien Outsider techniques to Fuxi, who developed a formation just for him and gave him 100,000 Celestial Immortals and 10 million Loose Immortals." The Godking pondered silently to himself. "What sort of techniques did he hand over? And what sort of a formation did Fuxi give him?"

Although their intelligence methods were formidable, there was no way it could be detailed to such a level. They weren't even able to find out the details of the formation Fuxi had created.

"And it seems Ji Ning has finished developing his own sword-art."

"Mmm...Swordfather Darklight evaluates it as being extraordinary. Third-stage swordforce? This kid, Ji Ning...through sparring with those puny little cultivators, he actually ended up reaching the third stage of swordforce. Sheesh..." The Godking shook his head. He himself didn't know much regarding the Dao of the Sword. Swordfather Darklight, however, was a terrifyingly powerful member of the Seamless Alliance who, in the Seamless Chaosworld, had been their number one expert in the Dao of the Sword.

However, the Seamless Chaosworld and the Pangu Chaosworld were

both destroyed, resulting in the birth of the Three Realms...and by then, everyone acknowledged that he was a bit inferior to Daofather Fujū!

“I knew that Ji Ning was formidable in heartforce, but he’s actually this impressive in swordforce as well? Still, he’s merely at the third stage; that’s nothing.” The Godking shook his head. “Not much of a threat.”

And then, the Godking cast Ji Ning to the back of his mind, turning his attention to other matters.

He was responsible for the entire Seamless Gate, and compared to his many other concerns, Ji Ning truly was a minor figure.

.....

The stone stele. The prisonworld.

The prisonworld held two of Ning’s bodies. One was dealing with a True God, while the other was dealing with the female True Immortal.

“Eh?” Ji Ning opened his eyes, ceasing his meditations on his sword-art. He looked downwards.

The bottle, gourd, bracelet, and other magic treasures around him continued to unleash torrents of fire, water, and wind against the foe below. The enemy’s magic treasure was shuddering, and its defensive force was beginning to weaken.

“Fifty-six years. Finally, she’s unable to hold on any longer.” Ning felt a hint of eagerness in his heart. Perhaps this female True Immortal would be able to help him by providing him with extremely powerful techniques or magic treasures.

Ning willed it, and whoosh! Instantly, the fire, water, and wind all returned to their respective treasures. Everything returned to normal. Ning definitely didn’t want to accidentally roast the woman to death!

“Submit.” Ning looked at the female True Immortal.

The female True Immortal dispersed her own magic treasure as well. She gave Ning a cold look.

Ning could sense how resolute she was. He couldn’t help but sigh and

say, “Why must you be like this? You are going to be imprisoned here for countless ages, no matter what; so what if you choose to serve me? All I need are some of your magic treasures and some of the techniques you hold in your memories. I won’t harm you or lower your own personal power at all. In the future, you’ll have a chance to escape this place.”

“Stop dreaming.” The female True Immortal continued to look at Ning coldly. “You lowly, crawling insect...forget about making me, Shui Jin, submit!”

“Empress Jin?” Ning was stunned.

When he had scoured True Immortal Winterpeak’s memories, he had learned of some of the more famous True Gods and True Immortals of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom. The woman before him was extremely emaciated, and her aura was unfamiliar to Ning. This was why, prior to this moment, Ning had no idea as to who she was. She was an extremely domineering True Immortal who was even more powerful than Winterpeak, and so she was referred to by others as ‘Empress Jin’.

“Empress Jin...” A reminiscent look appeared in the female True Immortal’s eyes. “That’s all in the past now. All in the past. Pangaea is gone. Everything is gone.”

“You want me, Shui Jin, to submit? Submit to someone as weak as you? Hahaha...ahahaha...” She began to laugh loudly, laugh wildly, laugh in a dreary, desolate way...

Whoosh.

She suddenly vanished, her soul dispersing. The only thing left behind was the echoes of her desolate laughter, which reverberated in the empty world.

Ning couldn’t help but sigh upon seeing this. Upon learning that she was Empress Jin, Ning had realized right away that it was highly unlikely that she would submit. In truth, every single top-tier True Immortal possessed incredible pride and self-confidence. The only reason why there was even a chance for them to submit to Ning was because their souls had been tormented by their chaos cycles of imprisonment within this

prisonworld. Some, however, would still rather die than submit!

But despite this, Ning didn't waver in his decision.

He needed to acquire more power from this prisonworld. He wanted to survive this tribulation, to survive the Endwar. He wanted to rescue his wife, to ensure that his daughter Brightmoon would be able to live a long and happy life. He wanted to ensure that his master and his other loved ones would survive as well. Thus...Ning would only give these alien Outsiders a single chance to survive: Submit to him! If they refused to choose to submit, then...they could all go die!

Chapter 44: Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals

After the female True Immortal known as 'Empress Jin' perished, Ji Ning carefully went through the relics that she had left behind. Although his gains were significant, he didn't find any important techniques or chaos items which he was in desperate need of. Clearly, prior to coming to this prisonworld, she had exchanged items that she couldn't use for large amounts of spirit pills and Immortal pills. Here in this prisonworld, those were what really mattered.

"Although I used six types of treasures at the same time to unleash fire, water, and wind against her...clearly, the power was vastly inferior to that of the Eight Fires Qiankun World." Ning shook his head. "I'll let my other clone deal with the True Gods and True Immortals. I should have this one deal with the Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals. Although their treasures are much less valuable, and although the chances that they are in possession of a powerful technique are very low, at least I can kill them or force them to submit in a much shorter period of time. I can also use them to train and temper my [Brightmoon] sword-art."

Ning had already comprehended 90% of the third chapter of the [Five Treasures] sword-art. The remaining parts were becoming increasingly difficult to understand. He would need to rely on repeated, actual battles so as to gain the insights he needed to better understand the [Five Treasures].

In addition, he created the [Brightmoon] sword-art through dueling weak Immortal cultivators. Only by battling against experts on his level in actual, life-and-death duels would he be able to further perfect this sword-art!

Obviously, outside the prisonworld it would be hard for him to find so many experts on his level to spar against. The prisonworld, however, had many.

"Overseer?" A skinny, weak-looking youth sat there, head raised as he

stared at the distant Ning. “A True Immortal...but with such a weak aura? Strange. Logically speaking, a position as important as ‘Overseer’ should be given to core members of Pangaea. How could a core member be a True Immortal of the weakest possible level? Can it be that the prisonworld has fallen into enemy hands?”

“DIE!” Ning let out a loud roar, and his twin swords howled through the skies towards the youth.

Upon seeing Ning attack him without even speaking to him, the skinny youth was shocked...and then a mad look appeared in his eyes. “So it really is an enemy. You want me to die? Puny True Immortal, you go die first!”

The skinny youth let out a low growl as the muscles on his tiny frame suddenly began to bulge out. His rune-covered skin became pure-white as he instantly transformed from a skinny, beggar-like youth to a figure that looked like a god of war. His body went blurry for a moment, then four different faces appeared on him, as well as a total of eight arms, each of which was wielding a strange, black, staff-like weapon. He growled, then pounced towards Ning. “Outsider, die!”

Ning viewed these people as alien Outsiders. They, too, viewed Ning as an alien Outsider!

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Sword-light flashed everywhere, as did dancing staff-shadows.

Ning was knocked flying backwards in their very first clash. He smashed hard against the ground, creating a deep ditch within it. Ning’s body then blurred momentarily before he, too, gained three heads and six arms, with a sword in each hand. “Master’s words were wise. If I wish to truly perfect [Brightmoon], I have to fight against more experts.” A blazing light was in Ning’s hands as he once more charged forward.

The two battled nonstop. It seemed as though the skies would collapse and the earth would shatter. The fight was absolutely frenetic.

This prisoner had four faces and eight arms, and his staff-techniques were extremely profound. Imprisoned here for countless eras, the only

thing he had to do was to meditate and cultivate, resulting in his staff-techniques become even more formidable, far more so than Ning's [Brightmoon] sword-art. Ning was at a complete disadvantage in their battle. Fortunately, however, Ning was protected by the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], and so even when he was struck he wouldn't be injured at all.

Ning didn't use the [Starseizing Hand] or his heartforce; the [Starseizing Hand] used up too much divine power, while heartforce was quickly depleted in a battle. In addition, what Ning really cared about right now was to further perfect his sword-arts. By relying on the protection of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], Ning was able to continue the fight, even though he was being completely outclassed.

"Damn. What the hell type of protective ability is this? As a Fiendgod Body Refiner, he's clearly just an Empyrean God. How the hell is his divine body this tough?!" The youth was beginning to panic.

Even in the Pangaea chaos-kingdom, protective divine abilities were extremely precious. It was incredibly difficult for someone at the Empyrean God level to be able to train his body to become comparable to a top-grade Pure Yang treasure. For example, the True God which Ning's other clone was dealing with only had a body that was on Ning's level as well! In truth, the only reason why Ning himself was able to completely master the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] was because of his accomplishments in the Realmwar in the Grand Xia. Daofather Crimsonbright wished to express his thanks, which was why he had gifted Ning with the many Great Firmament pills Ning needed.

"If this continues...my divine power continue to be depleted. Once it is all used up, I'll die." The youth was both furious and frantic. "But even if I die, I'm not going to let this alien Outsider off."

"Outsider...DIE!" The youth's entire body suddenly began to glow with red light. Clearly, he had used some sort of divine ability that allowed his power to increase by an explosive amount.

However, Ning was extremely skilled in defensive techniques, and his [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] continued to render his opponent's attacks

ineffective. He was still able to endure the blows and continue fighting.

After battling for another hour, Ning had become completely familiar with this foe's techniques. The youth had begun to repeat them over and over, and they were of no further use to Ning in terms of perfecting his sword-arts.

"[Starseizing Hand]!"

"Heartforce!"

"Shadowless!"

Ning's swords suddenly became blurry. Whoosh! The youth's four-faced head was instantly severed and sent flying into the air. The severed head's eyes were filled with a look of shock. He had clearly been dominating his foe...how was it that his foe had suddenly exploded with power that far surpassed his own? He had no idea that when Ning used both the [Starseizing Hand] and his fourth-stage heartforce, Ning's power was vastly superior to his own.

When he had overpowered Ning, he had struck Ning more than a hundred times without being able to breach Ning's [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] in the slightest.

When Ning had overpowered him...a single sword had lopped his head off!

This made it obvious how important a protective divine ability was. Alas, the [Indestructible Body] technique which Ning had learned from the stone stele required an incredible price to be paid for mastery. Even the likes of Fuxi and Subhuti, upon seeing the price, had instantly discarded the notion of training in it. This was because they hadn't even heard of some of the chaos materials necessary to master it.

Swoosh. The severed head came flying back, reattaching itself to the body.

"Eh?" The youth frowned in puzzlement as he stared at Ning. "Outsider, why didn't you kill me?" Given that Ning was able to sever his head with a blow, Ning clearly was capable of completely crushing and destroying his

body...and yet, Ning had not, allowing his head to fly back and reattach to it.

“Ahahaha...I’ve long heard that the Immortals and Gods of Pangaea are incredibly formidable. My hands were a bit itchy, so I wanted to see it for myself,” Ning said with a laugh.

“See it for yourself?” The youth was speechless. “Y-y-you...aren’t you afraid of me killing you?”

“Are you able to?” Ning rebutted.

The youth was stunned. Yes...given how formidable the man’s protective divine ability was, it would be impossible for anyone on his same level to overpower and kill him. The only solution would be to keep him suppressed!

“Right. Even if I suppressed you with my power...eventually, my divine power would be used up and I would still die.” The youth shook his head. What he didn’t know was that Ning actually had another body here. Even if the Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals of Pangaea were powerful enough to suppress him, the other clone could come and, by relying on the Eight Fires Qiankun World, slowly roast to death any and every Empyrean God or Celestial Immortal.

To roast the energy out of a True God or True Immortal might take dozens of years, but to do the same to an Empyrean God or Celestial Immortal would be far quicker.

“What exactly has happened to Pangaea? And...what exactly do you want?” The youth looked at Ning.

A short while later, the youth succumbed to Ning’s combination of threats and blandishments, electing to serve Ning. Ning was more powerful than him, which naturally made it so that he didn’t feel as opposed to serving Ning as more powerful figures might.

“If you really just wanted to spar against me...you could’ve first recruited me, then fought me. Both of us could’ve simply lowered the amount of energy we used to keep things safe. Wouldn’t that be easier?” The youth

still felt a bit of resentment; that battle just now had used up an enormous amount of his divine power.

“If I had first recruited you, would you have been willing to go all-out against me?” Ning shook his head. If the youth hadn’t had the desire to go all-out and try to kill Ning, the battle would’ve been completely different.

After recruiting the youth, Ning searched his memories, then went to the field of primordial chaos to replenish his divine power. The chaos region inside the stone stele was just a few hundred meters in size, but it was completely split apart from the prisonworld itself. This was because this chaos region was meant for Overseers to use. Because the chaos region had been created by the King of Pangaea, it naturally converted the primordial chaos within it into elemental energy.

The previous Overseers would occasionally wander the prisonworld, but they generally spent most of their time in the chaos region.

After replenishing his divine power, Ning spent a bit of time pondering the [Five Treasures], then improved his [Brightmoon] sword-art before once more seeking out that youth for more sparring.

Only after a full month did Ning leave to go deal with the next Empyrean God or Celestial Immortal.

And so, just like that, Ning began a voyage through the prisonworld in which he would sweep through all the Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals. Although the prisonworld was vast, it actually didn’t have that many Empyrean Gods or Celestial Immortals. There weren’t many, after all, at that level of power who would be qualified to be locked up in a place like this. Ning took every single battle very seriously, and after each battle he would gain many new ideas for further perfecting his sword-arts.

The [Brightmoon] sword-art continued to improve, and its power grew greater and greater.

In the blink of an eye, another forty-plus years had passed.

Ning had swept his way through more than four hundred Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals. It must be understood that the entire

Prisonworld 17 only held a bit more than a thousand individuals at that level of power. These four hundred-plus Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals 'offered' Ning many treasures, and he even acquired a pair of Protocosmic spirit-treasures! As for the number of Pure Yang treasures he acquired, the number was ridiculously high. Ning couldn't help but sigh at how different the Pangaea chaos-kingdom was from the Three Realms.

In the Three Realms, these Pure Yang treasures would be considered quite rare and valuable. Powerful Empyrean Gods and True Immortals would generally all have Protocosmic spirit-treasures on them.

In the Pangaea chaos-kingdom, however, Protocosmic spirit-treasures were very rare...but extremely powerful Pure Yang treasures were very common. Judging from the memories Ning had sifted through, Pangaea had far superior methods for manufacturing and producing magic treasures, which was why there were so many top-class Pure Yang treasures.

.....

Boom! Boom! Boom! Eight streaks of truefire dragons continued to blaze away at the green-haired man.

It had been eighty-two years!

Ning had used the Eight Fires Qiankun World to burn away at the green-haired man for eighty-two years. As far as this True God was concerned, every one of these years had been more difficult to endure than a trillion 'ordinary' years. His divine power continued to deplete without any replenishment at all.

"Stop it." Finally, the green-haired man called out.

Ning's clone had been analyzing some sword-arts. The past eighty-two years had been quite boring; all he did was occasionally add a bit of ki into the treasure while spending most of his energy on his sword-arts. Upon hearing the green-haired man's call, Ning immediately woke from his meditative trance.

Upon seeing the green-haired man looking towards him, Ning smiled.

If the man intended to commit suicide, he probably wouldn't have called out to Ning. He would've rather been burnt to death than speak.

Since he had spoken out...he was most likely about to submit.

Prior to him, Ning had dealt with two True Immortals. This would be the first True God who would submit to him. Perhaps there might be an unexpected surprise.

Chapter 45: Great Fortune! Great Fortune!

The green-haired man's eyes were like those of a starving hawk's as he glared at Ji Ning. He said hoarsely, "If I submit to you...what do you wish of me?"

Ning laughed. Clearly, the man was considering submitting. However, he was also a True God; if Ning went too far in humiliating him, he'd probably rather die than submit. Ning explained, "I need the treasures that you have on you. Here in this prison, your treasures are of no use to you anyhow. You might as well give them to me. Also – I need to search your memories..."

"Memories?" The green-haired man's face changed.

"To you, I'm an alien. To me, you are an alien." Ning smiled. "Your personal secrets might be very important to you, but they are completely meaningless to me. Don't worry; I won't tell anyone about them."

The green-haired man stared at Ning.

"I guarantee," Ning said, "That these two requests are all I want! If you accept, you continue living a peaceful life here. In addition, I'll provide you with spirit-pills to ensure that you'll be able to continue to survive. If you stay alive, you'll have a chance to leave the prisonworld in the future."

"Fine!" The green-haired man said hoarsely, "I accept."

Ning was pleasantly surprised by how forthright the man was in accepting.

The green-haired man shut his eyes, continuing to sit there within the formation. Ning reached out with his right hand from outside the formation, his arm instantly expanding to become hundreds of kilometers long. His palm pressed down against the top of the green-haired man's head as he sent his soul energy forward, beginning to execute the soulscouring technique. The green-haired man didn't attempt to fight back at all. If he did, there was no way Ning would be able to accomplish the soulscouring.

This True God had an awe-inspiringly large number of memories. Countless thought-bubbles filled his mindspace, each of which represented major memories. Some of the bubbles were covered with complicated seals, none of which Ning was able to see through. Empyrean Gods, Celestial Immortals, True Gods, and True Immortals all had to swear life-oaths after learning powerful spells and techniques. Even if they wanted to teach them to others, they wouldn't be able to.

“No wonder he was willing to submit...”

“So he harbors such tremendous enmity in his heart...and his foes are all Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals. Even if Pangaea really was destroyed, some of those Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals must have been able to successfully flee.” After searching through the memories, Ning understood who this True God was and the hatred this True God harbored.

This man wanted to leave, to find his foes, to kill them all! Even if Pangaea was destroyed, he would still search its ruins to find his foes. He wouldn't feel satisfied until he was certain they were all dead.

Ning didn't pay too much attention to the exact details of this feud. He discarded that information, focusing his attention in a different direction...

Whoosh.

After Ning's soul energy entered a particularly thought-bubble, a profound technique suddenly entered his mind.

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Sword Immortal world. The Five Treasured Peaks.

A white-robed Ning was seated within the thatched cottage, meditating on sword-arts. He was suddenly startled awake as the information pertaining to that technique entered his mind.

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“Master, Brightmoon is causing trouble again. She saw injustice occurring and insisted on intervening, resulting in her offending several Immortal cultivators. After she beat them up, their elders came. She just

went ‘kill, kill, kill’ and ended up slaughtering quite a few of them. She’s in real trouble now; the Patriarch of their clan is a Celestial Immortal. I’m not worried about his flunkies, but if he personally appears we’re going to be in serious trouble. Neither I nor Autumn Leaf have undergone our tribulations!” Little Qing frantically reported the above to the black-robed Ji Ning.

“Oh? It’s fine. Don’t worry.” The black-robed Ning nodded. “Brightmoon has a kind heart. It’s good to let her experience more of the world. Still... keep a close eye on her. Don’t let her embark upon the path of evil.”

“Don’t worry, Autumn Leaf and I are keeping a close watch on her.” Little Qing nodded repeatedly. “Alright, I’m going to go back now.”

Swoosh. She disappeared into thin air, teleporting away.

The black-robed Ning just chuckled. After so many years, Brightmoon had become much more mature than before. In fact, she didn’t like to roam about in her natural childlike form, and so changed her appearance into that of a young woman. In addition, she had been blessed with talent by her parents. Given that Patriarch Subhuti doted on her as well, she had long ago reached the Void-level. However, due to her extraordinary background, it was guaranteed that her Celestial Tribulation would be an extraordinary one. Thus, she was still building up power in preparing for it. Ning allowed Brightmoon to roam the outside world, only asking that she keep Little Qing and Autumn Leaf by her side.

In truth, there was something which none of the three realized...

Ning’s Primaltwin had been split into eighteen clones, and one of them was hidden within an ordinary-looking jade talisman which Brightmoon was carrying. In reality, this jade talisman was a Pure Yang treasure, one which Ning had gone to Mount Innerheart to ask his senior apprentice-brother Lord Jiang to forge. Lord Jiang had set up seals atop this jade talisman, making it look like an ordinary item that was completely unremarkable.

After binding the jade talisman to himself, Ning had gifted it to his daughter. It was very rare for Ning to give her gifts, and so Brightmoon

loved this one and carried it with her at all times. What she didn't realize was that this 'ordinary' jade talisman was actually a Pure Yang treasure which contained a pocket dimension inside it. Within that pocket dimension was a clone of Ji Ning which primarily focused on meditating and training in sword-arts while being prepared to protect his daughter at all times.

However, Ning didn't want his daughter to know that he was with her. Once she knew, this adventure would no longer be much of a 'tempering' for her, and she would probably be angry with him as well.

"Brightmoon is really...sheesh." Whenever he thought of his daughter, he couldn't help but smile...but then the look on his face froze.

A profound technique had suddenly filled his mind.

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Eighteen clones of his true body. Eighteen clones of his Primaltwin.

Every single clone learned this technique at the same instant...and all of them were stunned. Ning had spent more than ninety years sweeping through the prisonworld, dealing with more than eight hundred Emphyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals, as well as three True Gods and True Immortals. Upon soulscouring this True God...finally, Ning gained something of true value.

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Within the prisonworld.

After completely learning and memorizing the entire technique, Ning suppressed his excitement and continued to search through the rest of the True God's memories. Only after finishing his search did he stop the soulscouring.

A look of delight and joy was in Ning's eyes. His body was actually quivering slightly, and he murmured to himself, "Great fortune...a great fortune..."

"The heavens are helping me."

“The heavens are helping me!!!” Ning’s eyes were filled with blazing excitement.

Ning had always believed the Pangaea chaos-kingdom to be even more formidable than the Three Realms, which meant that it had to have some truly powerful divine abilities and spells. The Three Realms had the [Starseizing Hand], the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], and other techniques. Logically speaking, Pangaea should have techniques which were even more powerful. And it was true; Pangaea did indeed have formidable divine abilities at its disposal, but the ones which Ning had discovered thus far had all been sealed away with life-oaths, preventing him from ‘reading’ them.

This time, however, Ning had finally acquired a technique...and it was a technique which he deeply desired.

“The [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] evasion technique,” Ning murmured softly to himself. “Within the primordial chaos, there are seas of lightning, and within those lightning seas there are spirit-snakes with nine horns on their heads...”

“I can train in this.”

“I can absolutely train in this. This is something that can be used in the Three Realms.” Ning hadn’t expected that he would encounter such a tremendous stroke of fortune.

In the Three Realms, evasion techniques were extremely important. The more formidable an evasion technique, the faster one would be able to move. The most famous techniques in the Three Realms included the [Somersault Cloud] of his senior apprentice-brother, Sun Wukong, as well as the [Wings of the Garuda] of the great golden-winged Roc. These were some of the most supreme evasion techniques of the Three Realms. When one reached the apex of the [Somersault Cloud] or [Wings of the Garuda], one would be able to move three hundred thousand kilometers in a single instant! This was a level of speed which even many True Gods and Daofathers found difficult to reach.

Ning, however, knew the truth...that the truly supreme, number one

evasion technique of the Three Realms was a legendary technique known as the [Golden Sunstreak]!

The most supreme of stars, the Solar Star, would give birth to a type of Godbeast known as the Golden Crow! Only Golden Crows which were completely born from the energy of the Solar Star were considered true, perfect Golden Crows. As for lesser Golden Crows that had mixed heritage or which were born after true Golden Crows copulated with other living creatures, there was no way their bloodline could ever reach the level of perfect purity.

During the Primordial Era, the Solar Star had once given birth to ten Golden Crows at the same time. These ten Golden Crows all possessed incredible power. By relying on their innate divine abilities, they were able to roam the Primordial World without fear. One of them actually reached the True God level, and was given the respectful title of 'Emperor of Monsters'. The ten Golden Crows all radiated infinite amounts of blazing heat. They were like ten suns that baked the Primordial World, causing the entire world endless amounts of anguish.

In addition, all ten of them had an incredibly powerful evasion technique...the [Golden Sunstreak]! The power of a True God, combined with the [Golden Sunstreak] divine ability...not even Mother Nuwa and the other Elder Gods had been able to catch them.

And then...Houyi had acted.

Houyi was just as terrifyingly talented as the Golden Crows, and he possessed a level of power that was enough to stun and shake the Primordial Era. His arrows were the fastest in the world, and they possessed enough power to cause even major powers to feel fear. Of course...not even Houyi was certain that he would be strong enough to slay the Golden Crow that had been titled the 'Emperor of Monsters'. Thus, Houyi had spent quite a long period of time producing ten arrows of incredible power...and then, Houyi had struck! It was as though spacetime was completely incapable of impeding his arrows. Even the 'Emperor of Monsters' had been unable to escape and had perished to his first arrow. As for the remaining nine? Although they were ridiculously fast, there was

no way they could escape Houyi's arrows. Houyi slew eight of them. In the end, Mother Nuwa interceded, resulting in the last one being spared. 1

However...the fact that they died didn't mean that the [Golden Sunstreak] was a weak divine ability!

The [Golden Sunstreak], in truth, simply converted the user into a streak of light! Its speed was the speed of light itself! Once one merged one's body into the [Golden Sunstreak], the body would go wherever that streak of light went. As for the speed of this technique...it allowed the user to travel three hundred thousand kilometers in an instant! This was the absolute limit in terms of raw speed. Not even major powers were able to surpass the speed of the [Golden Sunstreak]. Their only options were to use their control over spacetime or certain treasures and spells to slow down the Golden Crows, causing them to fly slower; only then would they be able to catch up.

None of them, however, were capable of catching up to the Golden Crow that had reached the True God level. Not even Houyi! Houyi had to produce special arrows of terrifying power in order to catch them and kill them with his shots.

[Golden Sunstreak]...the speed of light!

This was definitely a technique that allowed one to move faster than any other living creature of the Three Realms. Ning's third apprentice-brother was a Golden Crow that had been birthed from the Solar Star during the era of the Three Realms, and he was a master of this divine ability.

Many majors powers deeply desired to train in it, but...only Golden Crows that were born from the Solar Star could do so!

"[Ninehorn Lightning Serpent]?" Ning was incredibly excited.

This technique was an evasive divine ability that was on the same level as the [Golden Sunstreak].

The [Golden Sunstreak] involved a streak of blazing light that only Golden Crows could control.

The [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent], in turn, involved a bolt of living

lightning!

It was incredibly difficult to train in, and in fact it could be said that cultivators had a 90% chance of dying when attempting to train in it. Upon mastering it, however, one would be able to enter the lightning serpent and move far away in a single lightning bolt. The speed of this lightning bolt was just as fast as the speed of light; both had reached the utter limit of speed possible.

“If I was to master this technique, I’d be able to roam the Three Realms and attack the Seamless Gate’s bases as I pleased. They wouldn’t be able to catch me!” Ning knew that this evasion technique was extremely difficult to train in, but he instantly decided that he was going to master it, no matter the cost!

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1. The legend of Houyi shooting down nine of the ten suns is one of the more famous Chinese legends, and is in fact the principle legend of Houyi and the reason why he is a legendary Chinese archer.

Chapter 46: [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent]

After a period of excitement, Ji Ning began to ponder as to how he should train in this technique.

The [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] evasion technique was definitely a first-class technique even in the Pangaea chaos-kingdom. It had already reached the utmost apex of speed. An incredible technique like this...the price one would have to pay to get even a basic level of skill in it would be similarly shocking.

The first requirement, for example, was to transform the divine body, making it so that the lightning serpent could swim about within it without harming it at all.

This, however, was incredibly difficult...

The [Golden Sunstreak], for example, consisted of Golden Solarfire that had gained sentience. Golden Solarfire was a type of fire that surpassed the nine mighty types of truefire; not even True Gods or Daofathers would dare to use their bodies to take it head-on. Even if they tried to use spells or artifacts to block it, they might still be roasted to death! The Golden Crow, however, was born within the deepest depths of the Solar Star. Ordinary mortals would drown when they fell into the sea, but fish would swim within it with ease. In a similar manner, Golden Crows would be able to bathe in Golden Solarfire as though they were at home. They were naturally gifted with the ability to be completely unharmed by it, which is why they were able to master the [Golden Sunstreak] technique.

The wild and untamable Ninehorn Lightning Serpents held the same level of power as Golden Solarfire!

Even though Ning had the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] protecting him, he would still be instantly reduced to dust by the power of the lightning serpent! Thus, he had to first transform his divine body...but the transformation process was the most dangerous part of training in this technique, with a 90% chance of death. If he made just the slightest mistake, his divine body would be reduced by the lightning serpent into

ash!

The second requirement...

Once the lightning serpent became able to roam within the divine body without harming it, the cultivator could begin to nourish and create the divine tattoo of a 'lightning serpent egg'. This would give the lightning serpent a 'home', as it would be able to coil up within that 'egg'. In addition, the divine tattoo of the egg would slowly transform the lightning serpent, making it evolve and change in a qualitative manner. It would be as though the lightning serpent was a blade that had been put in a scabbard, no longer capable of causing any damage.

Otherwise...given how wild and violent these lightning serpents were, there would be no way to control them at all. The lightning serpent had to be tamed and rendered harmless. Only then would it be docile, at which point it could be used to execute the evasion technique!

The same was true of the [Golden Sunstreak] technique which the Golden Crows used. After being tamed by the Golden Crow, the streak of sentient sunlight would no longer have its inherent, terrifying offensive power. It would become very docile and gentle, under the complete control of the Golden Crow. It would allow the Golden Crow to go wherever it wanted to go.

But of course, taming and transforming something like the Ninehorn Lightning Serpent was an incredibly dangerous process. This was because during the taming and transforming process, the lightning serpent would be incredibly violent. An external source of power would be needed to help subdue it, and within the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] evasion technique there was a record of methods involving 'Myriad Thunders Godgems', 'Thousandrot Godfruits', or 'chaos nectar'.

Thousandrot Godtrees...when they reached the end of their lifespan, they would begin to rot away and decay, but after they completely rotted away a brand new sapling would emerge from within and begin to grow. This new tree would become even taller and greater than the previous one, but eventually it too would begin to rot away...

Each rotting would lead to the next tree growing ever larger and filled with ever more vitality and energy. Finally, after a thousand rottings and rebirths, the godtree would reach the maximum limit of power, at which point in time it would bear fruit. This sort of fruit was known as the 'Thousandrot Godfruit'. The total time needed for the fruit to be created was a full chaos cycle. After ripening, it would instantly fall down from the tree. However, as soon as it landed and touched anything besides primordial chaos, it would instantly transform into dust. Thus, one had to wait there in advance and prepare to catch the godfruit.

After the fruit ripened and fell, the Thousandrot Godtree would once more decay and rot away, beginning a completely new cycle.

Thousandrot Godfruit possessed incredible, unfathomable, miraculous power. In the chaos-kingdom of Pangaea, it was something which only the three World-level powers were permitted to possess.

Myriad Thunders Godgems, by comparison, were even rarer than Thousandrot Godfruits.

Within the infinite primordial chaos, seas of lightning would appear on occasion. In this regions, large amounts of lightning would come together, resulting in the emergence of lightning sea serpents of tremendous power; these things were on the same level of power as Golden Solarfire. If the lightning sea serpents gained sentience, they would grow nine horns on their heads, at which point they would be known as Ninehorn Lightning Serpents. Only the sentient lightning serpents with nine horns were tamable.

If the sea of lightning was vast enough, and there were enough Ninehorn Lightning Serpents present...sometimes, Myriad Thunders Godgems would be crystallized. Ninehorn Lightning Serpents love to swim around these godgems. Thus if one acquired one such godgem, one would be able to easily tame a lightning serpent.

Alas...

The primordial chaos was infinitely vast, and seas of lightning would only be encountered every so often. Seas of lightning that contained

Myriad Thunders Godgems were even rarer, and whenever they were discovered, the major powers who found out would immediately think up ways to seize them for themselves!

Chaos nectar was also incredibly mysterious. One had to establish a vast world, then use it as the foundation for a grand formation meant to extract essence from the primordial chaos. Each chaos cycle, only six bottles of chaos nectar could be harvested! In addition, since chaos nectar possessed no elemental qualities of its own, it was usable in many different ways. The primordial chaos gave birth to all things, after all! Thus, chaos nectar could also be used to tame a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent.

To tame a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent, one would normally need either nine Thousandrot Godfruits, a single Myriad Thunders Godgem, or six bottles of chaos nectar.

“In the Three Realms, I’ve never even heard of this godfruit or this godgem. I do, however, have chaos nectar.” Ning pondered to himself. “No matter what, I’ll need a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent; first to transform my body, then to tame it for ‘riding’. The Three Realms does, however, have a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent within it.”

“Time to pay a visit to Exalted Celestial Thundergod,” Ning mused to himself.

In the Three Realms, there was a major power who was capable of controlling Ninehorn Lightning Serpents. He was Exalted Celestial Thundergod!

This was an incredibly mighty major power who perpetually kept to himself in seclusion. Even to this day, with the Three Realms gripped by a storm, he rarely intervened. In truth, there were many major powers like him, who kept to themselves in seclusion. They were all preparing quietly, waiting for the Endwar to come before they would erupt with their full power and slay their foes.

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Sword Immortal world. The Five Treasured Peaks.

Ning was seated within the thatched cottage. Rising to his feet, he called out, "Ninefangs."

A streak of light flew towards the cottage from far away, landing in front of it. It was Ninefangs.

"Accompany me to the Thundergod major world," Ning instructed.

"Yes," Ninefangs acknowledged.

The two entered the Voidboat, then exited Sword Immortal world via the Void, hastening towards the Thundergod world.

Long ago, in the distant past, before the Primordial Era had even begun, the primordial chaos had given birth to ten mighty Elder Gods and eighty-one True Gods.

The eighty-one True Gods were all born with mastery over a Grand Dao. One of them was Exalted Celestial Thundergod, who was born with control over the Grand Dao of Lightning. He naturally possessed tremendous talent in thunder and lightning. However, although his divine body was capable of withstanding many lightning bolts, it was unable to withstand the power of the lightning sea serpents or the Ninehorn Lightning Serpents of the primordial chaos. He only had a True God's body, after all.

Elder God of Fire Zhurong, for example, was able to withstand the Golden Solarfire and Golden Sunstreaks. Alas, Elder God Zhurong did not have any methods at his disposal for actually taming any of those streaks of fiery light.

The Golden Crow's ability to do so was an innate one.

.....

BOOM!

A vast world, filled with countless bolts of lightning that were thundering down from up high. One could see with the naked eye a thousand lightning bolts at any given moment.

The Voidboat was currently in the skies of this world. Although

lightning bolts continuously hammered against it, they were unable to damage it at all.

“Let me take a look first.” Ning spread out his heartforce.

“Exalted Celestial Thundergod is over there. Let’s go,” Ning said. Although Thundergod possessed tremendous power and was one of the top-tier Daofathers, his skill in heartforce was inferior to Ning’s.

Swoosh.

The Voidboat flew through the skies, quickly arriving before a levitating mountain. The peak of this levitating mountain was surrounded by a large amount of electricity, and there were armored soldiers guarding the peak as well.

“Who goes there!” A Celestial Immortal soldier barked out.

“I am Ji Ning. I wish to pay my respects to Exalted Celestial Thundergod,” Ning said respectfully.

“Ji Ning?” The group of soldiers was quite surprised. They had all naturally heard of the famous Sword Immortal Darknorth, Ji Ning. The soldier immediately replied, “Sword Immortal Darknorth, please wait a moment. I’ll go make a report right away.” Instantly, the soldier quickly departed to relay the message. As for Ning and Ninefangs, a cloud appeared beneath their feet. They stood atop the cloud and waited patiently. This was the territory of a top-tier Daofather; they didn’t dare to be the slightest bit discourteous.

A short while later, the Celestial Immortal flew back.

“The Exalted Celestial has instructed for you to go see him, Sword Immortal Darknorth.”

“Ninefangs, waited for me here,” Ning instructed. Ning then flew by himself towards the top of the mountain peak, where the Celestial Immortal was waiting for him. “Sword Immortal Darknorth, please follow me.”

As Ning was led forward, he secretly sighed to himself. Generally

speaking, most major powers would beautify their residences. The Dao Palace of the East, Mount Ling of the West, Mount Innerheart, the Celestial Court...these were all beautiful places. Exalted Celestial Thundergod, however, had chosen a place that was nearly pitch-black. This levitating mountain didn't even have a single speck of vegetation.

"The Exalted Celestial is over there," the soldier said hurriedly.

Ning took a look. He saw a tall, towering figure seated in the distance. The figure had to be at least thirty thousand meters tall.

True Gods were born with bodies of this size; it could be considered a 'normal' height.

"Good." Ning smiled and nodded, then walked towards the figure. He soon arrived at the dais before the figure, then said respectfully, "Ji Ning pays his respects to you, Exalted Celestial Thundergod."

The towering, muscular figure, dressed in pitch-black armor, opened his eyes. Sparks of lightning could be seen within them as he gazed down at the miniscule Ning. "Ji Ning. I've heard of you before. Suhbuti is indeed talented in teaching his disciples. Go ahead and speak. Why have you come to my place?"

Ning secretly let out a sigh of relief. From the sound of it, this person would most likely be willing to give Ning's master, Patriarch Subhuti, some face.

"This junior is in desperate need of a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent," Ning said respectfully. "Of the major powers of the Three Realms, only you, Exalted Celestial Thundergod, are in possession of these lightning serpents. This junior would like to beg you, Exalted Celestial, to bestow one such serpent. I am willing to use Protocosmic spirit-treasures to trade for it."

The towering Thundergod just closed his eyes. He said in a calm voice, "Leave. Immediately."

Ning was stunned.

Exalted Celestial Thundergod wasn't even going to discuss this, and

instead had ordered Ning to leave immediately? What was he supposed to do?

“Exalted Celestial, this junior is willing to use treasures to trade for it. Please consi-...” Ning said frantically.

Exalted Celestial Thundergod opened his eyes. His gaze was like ice. “If you don’t leave...don’t blame me for showing no mercy!”

For a moment, Ning didn’t know what to do.

“SCRAM!” Exalted Celestial Thundergod glared coldly towards Ning as he roared at him.

Ning’s face turned ashen. He immediately bowed, turned, and left.

Chapter 47: No Other Options

Empyrean God Ninefangs was waiting outside the levitating mountain atop his cloud. Suddenly, he saw his Manorlord, Ji Ning, appear from within the distant mountain peaks. Ning was hurriedly walking in his direction. Ninefangs couldn't help but feel surprised: "Why has the Manorlord returned so quickly from his meeting with Exalted Celestial Thundergod?"

Swoosh.

With a single step, Ning moved to Ninefangs' cloud.

"Manorlord?" Ninefangs whispered softly.

"Let's leave." Ning didn't waste time explaining. He immediately released his Voidboat, entered it alongside Ninefangs, then departed through the Void.

.....

A Voidboat suddenly appeared amidst the clouds of the major world known as the 'Hu Kingdom'.

"When Exalted Celestial Thundergod first saw me, he was clearly quite courteous. But as soon as I mentioned the Ninehorn Lightning Serpent, he immediately turned hostile." Ning carefully pondered what had just happened. Given that the Three Realms had been swept into a storm, most of the major powers in their alliance were fairly friendly towards the younger fellows. Ning had already met with figures like Daofather Crimsonbright, Fuxi, and others. All of them were very friendly to him. Although Exalted Celestial Thundergod was famous for his explosive temper, he had also been quite friendly at first as well.

"Why did he turn so hostile when I mentioned the Ninehorn Lightning Serpent? I was willing to use treasures to trade for it, but he wasn't even willing to consider it." Ning frowned in thought. "What should I do? The only major power in the Three Realms that possesses Ninehorn Lightning Serpents is Exalted Celestial Thundergod. If I can't acquire one from him,

then I'll have no choice but to go to a lightning sea if I want to train in this technique..."

Capturing Ninehorn Lightning Serpents was incredibly difficult. Not even the major powers who were skilled in capturing creatures were generally willing to spend the effort necessary, as the Ninehorn Lightning Serpents were of no use to them. The only one who was willing to spend so many years on this task was Exalted Celestial Thundergod, who had captured quite a few of them over the countless eons.

"Manorlord?" Ninefangs asked, puzzled, "Why have we come to the Hu Kingdom?"

"To visit True Immortal Hu Yu, of course," Ning said.

The Hu clan was a clan that was subordinate to the Primordial Imperial Clan of humanity. Although it was quite flourishing, it had never given birth to a True God or a Daofather. After the Primordial World was destroyed and the Three Realms were born, the Hu clan had moved here to this major world, taking it over! Given the Hu clan's power, conquering a major world was very easy.

Even back during the Primordial Era, the Hu clan had more than eighteen Empyrean Gods and True Immortals amongst their ranks. By now, they had more than thirty!

"True Immortal Hu Yu?" Ninefangs was puzzled. He didn't understand why Ning wished to meet with True Immortal Hu Yu.

Whoosh. Ning spread out his coresense to encompass the entire major world, quickly discovering True Immortal Hu Yu's location.

.....

Within a secluded mountain valley. There were a few thatched cottages scattered throughout the valley. A few women could be seen teasing each other, some of them playing around within the waters of a creek.

"Fellow Daoist Hu Yu." A voice suddenly rang out within the valley.

"Mm?" One of the women playing around within the water, a green-

robed woman, unleashed her coresense. She immediately located the white-robed youth and the bald elder located outside the formation protecting this valley.

“Ji Ning?” The green-robed woman immediately recognized him. “That bald old man by his side should be Empyrean God Ninefangs, one of the seven Empyrean Gods led by Empyrean God Redsnow who appeared within the Realmwar for the Crimsonbright Realm.”

“Big sister, what is it?”

“Big sister.”

The other women all emerged from the creek and from their respective houses, gathering around her. In truth, women were all Celestial Immortals who were under the tutelage of True Immortal Hu Yu. However, True Immortal Hu Yu disliked referring to others as ‘disciple’ or being referred to as ‘master’, and so these women usually referred to her as ‘big sister’.

“No more playing around,” True Immortal Hu Yu instructed. Instantly, the female Celestial Immortals all fell silent, no longer daring to run around. However, they were all curious...who was this visitor?

True Immortal Hu Yu waved her hand.

Whoosh.

An opening suddenly appeared at the end of the gorge. This gorge had been covered by a protective barrier which wasn’t easy to penetrate. From the opening emerged two men, a white-robed youth and a bald old servant.

“Fellow Daoist Darknorth.” True Immortal Hu Yu smiled merrily.

“Fellow Daoist Hu Yu. I’ve come with a request,” Ning said.

“Oh? Come inside and speak. If there’s anything I can help you with, fellow Daoist, I definitely won’t just stand by idle.” True Immortal Hu Yu was extremely curious. What did this famous Sword Immortal Darknorth wish of her? She immediately guided Ning into a thatched cottage.

The interior of the thatched cottage was decorated in a very refined manner. Ning and Hu Yu both sat down facing each other, with Hu Yu pouring some Immortal wine for Ning.

“Before I came to your place, fellow Daoist, I paid a visit to your master; Exalted Celestial Thundergod,” Ning said. “I visited him with the intention of trading him some treasures for a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent...but I didn’t expect that he immediately ordered me to leave without even letting me finish my words. I was out of options, so I came here to meet with you, fellow Daoist, in the hopes that you might have an idea.”

Hu Yu was the disciple which Thundergod doted on the most.

Exalted Celestial Thundergod was born from the primordial chaos with control over the Grand Dao of Thunder. His temper was equally explosive as his Dao; although there were some disciples he doted upon, there were others he was extremely strict with. The one he doted on the most was his one and only female disciple, True Immortal Hu Yu. This was why Ning had come to meet with Hu Yu, in the hopes that she might have an idea.

“You want a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent?” Hu Yu was surprised.

“Yes.” Ning nodded.

“That’s...going to be hard.” Hu Yu shook her head. “It’s true that the only person in the Three Realms who possesses these serpents is my master... but to Master, these serpents are incredibly important. Once, long ago, Daoist Three Purities asked for Master to provide him with a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent for use in forging a certain magic treasure. Master was extremely unwilling. In the end, Daoist Three Purities gave my master multiple Chaos ingredients that he needed before my master accepted. However, that was a long, long time ago. Now that the storm has decided... there’s no way even Daoist Three Purities would be able to acquire another serpent from him, to say nothing of you.”

“Oh?” Ning was surprised.

“Don’t you know that Master’s most important treasure is the ‘Hammer of Punishment Thunder’?” Hu Yu asked.

“I do know.” Ning nodded. “Exalted Celestial Thundergod wields the Hammer of Punishment Thunder, releasing lightning to punish wicked Immortals and Fiends alike.” Ning was puzzled. “But what does that have to do with the Ninehorn Lightning Serpents?”

“Where do you think the lightning of the hammer comes from?” Hu Yu shook her head and smiled. “Master can simply summon some of the weaker types of lightning from the natural world, but he has to work hard to extract the more powerful types of lightning from lightning seas in the primordial chaos. This is especially true for the supreme type of lightning, the Ninehorn Lightning Serpents. After extracting them, he has to refine them before he can smelt them into his Hammer of Punishment Thunder. This allows him to release them at a critical moment to assault his foes, then draw them back after the attack is finished.”

Ning was startled.

It was true that of the various types of thunder, the most powerful types were the lightning sea serpents and Ninehorn Lightning Serpents. The lightning sea serpents were not sentient, while the Ninehorn Lightning Serpents were. Thus, comparatively speaking the horned serpents were easier to refine and smelt, as the mindless lightning sea serpents were completely uncontrollable.

This was why even the likes of Elder God Zhurong was unable to take control over Golden Solarfire, forcing him to devise his own ‘Zhurong Godfire’. Suiren had similarly been unable to control Golden Solarfire, which was why he had to devise his own Eternal Kindfire, which was equally powerful.

The reason why they couldn’t control it...was because it was simply too explosive and wild!

Golden Solarfire didn’t possess any sentience. Thus, it was too explosive and wild! Even Fuxi, the number one formations expert of the Three Realms, was merely able to ‘guide’ the Golden Solarfire into his formation, and the guiding process was still extraordinarily tiresome. He had completely mastered and fused the Heavenly Daos of both Yin and Yang,

and his skill in formations was tremendous...but that was still all he was capable of.

Lightning sea serpents were just like Golden Solarfire; they were both too wild and untamable.

Ninehorn Lightning Serpents were sentient, which was why one could bind them. However, they were extremely rare; only a tiny percentage of the already-rare lightning sea serpents would gain sentience and transform into Ninehorn Lightning Serpents.

“As far as Master is concerned, these serpents are part of his killer weapon, his most powerful attack. Master has spent an enormous amount of blood and sweat binding every single serpent and infusing them into his hammer.” Hu Yu continued, “If it wasn’t for this great tribulation, there might be a tiny chance that Master would be willing to give up one of them...but the tribulation has arrived, and he might very well die in the Endwar. There’s absolutely no way he would give up any of them at all.”

“This is something that will have an impact on his chances of his survival. Given Master’s temperament...it’s useless for anyone to try to convince him.” Hu Yu gave Ning a look. “I’m just his disciple; there’s nothing I can do at all.”

Ning nodded. “So that’s why. I was rash and foolish.”

“Fellow Daoist Darknorth, I urge you to give up your hopes of acquiring the Ninehorn Lightning Serpents,” Hu Yu said. “Aside from Master’s serpents, the only way you can find them is by going to the lightning seas within the primordial chaos. However, those lightning seas contain many lightning sea serpents, with a small number of Ninehorn Lightning Serpents intermingled within. Not even major powers would dare to go too deep within. Master has the body of a thundergod, and thus he is most likely the number one figure in the Three Realms in terms of catching these serpents. Despite that, it took him a long time and much work before he was able to catch a few.”

“I know.” Ning nodded slowly. “Sorry to have troubled you, fellow Daoist Hu Yu. I’ll leave now.”

.....

Ning ordered Ninefangs to temporarily return to the Starseizer major world, then went by himself via Voidboat into the primordial chaos.

Chaos mist billowed everywhere around him.

If he went too far and too deep into the primordial chaos, it was entirely possible that he would become lost. Thankfully, Ning had some maps regarding the chaos regions around the Three Realms. Two lightning seas were marked down on the maps, and so Ning naturally headed towards the closest one. However...this still took him much deeper into the primordial chaos than he went last time. Thus, he advanced very carefully, for fear of becoming lost.

He advanced continuously through the primordial chaos in his Voidboat, tearing through space and using the various stars as his signposts. He advanced for twelve full hours, and the amount of space he travelled past in the Voidboat was most likely several times larger than the Three Realms themselves.

“Here I am.”

Ning stood up within the Voidboat, staring into the distance.

A vast, endless sea...

A sea of lightning and thunder...

As far as he could see, there were countless streaks of jagged white lightning that came together to form an endless sea of electricity. The deeper one went into the sea, the darker it became. At the deepest parts, one could even see black flashes of lightning. These black flashes of lightning were all shaped like giant serpents. These were the ‘lightning sea serpents’, living lightning-beings that even major powers feared.

A single lightning sea serpent was one thing, but the depths of the lightning sea held countless black streaks of lightning within them. The lightning sea serpents there were simply uncountably numerous. Even the mightiest of major powers would have to go all-out in order to go deep into the lightning sea. However, Ninehorn Lightning Serpents were

incredibly rare, with less than one in ten million lightning sea serpents giving birth to one such sentient serpent. From this, one could tell how difficult it was to find and catch them!

“I have no other choice.”

“I’ll have to take the risk.” Ning stood atop the Voidboat, gazing deep into the endless lightning sea.

Chapter 48: Deep Within the Lightning Sea

“I have to enter the lightning sea in order to train this divine ability.” Ji Ning had no other options.

Ning had fifteen other clones of his true body by his side, hidden within the Starseizing Manor. One of them emerged from the manor, then flew towards the endless sea of lightning.

After flying for a short while, the clone reached the borders of the lightning sea.

“Whew.” Staring at the countless flashes of white lightning before him, Ning couldn’t help but feel his heart shudder.

“Time to go in.” With a boom, Ning charged forward into the endless flashing streaks of lightning. Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Countless lightning bolts surged around him. Ning had long ago put away his magic robes, leaving him completely nude within the sea of lightning. He allowed the white lightning bolts to crash down upon his body repeatedly, and almost instantly close to a thousand lightning bolts came hammering down against him.

These lightning bolts were countless times more powerful than the lightning bolts Ning had encountered during the ninth nine-set of his Empyrean Tribulation. Fortunately, Ning had already mastered the Ninth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] and so was able to take them with ease.

“Time to begin training in the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] and transform my divine body.” Ning allowed his nude body to bathe in the lightning, shutting his eyes and focusing on activating the divine ability. Instantly, a series of divine golden tattoos began to appear on the surface of his body. As the divine tattoos continued to appear, the white lightning around Ning that had been attacking him seemed to become more gentle.

Slowly, Ning’s entire body became covered in countless golden tattoos.

These golden tattoos were all linked together, and one could vaguely make out a single massive character...the character for lightning in the script of the Pangaea chaos-kingdom.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Once the barrier of golden tattoo-light was formed, the surrounding white lightning all began to swirl around it. Slowly, a vortex of lightning was formed, and at the center of this vortex was what looked like a cocoon of lightning, with Ning located within the cocoon.

Inside the lightning cocoon.

The muscles and skin of Ning's naked body were all twitching and shuddering as strands of white lightning continuously flowed into them.

Previously, Ning's body had been capable of easily withstanding the white bolts of lightning thanks to the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], which completely blocked all the lightning. But to transform his divine body, he had to allow the lightning to enter every single part of it. Only then would his divine body undergo a qualitative change. Right now, his body wasn't truly 'defending' against the lightning; it was just lowering the power of the lightning dramatically. One slip-up, however, and the body would instantly be reduced to dust.

This was just the beginning. The body's elemental composition had to be completely changed.

All bodies had elemental affinities and natures. Some, for example, were born with bodies of water, while others were born with bodies of fire. Generally speaking, at Ning's level, the nature of the body didn't really matter. For example, even Exalted Celestial Thundergod, who was born with control over the Grand Dao of Thunder, didn't have a body that could allow lightning sea serpents or Ninehorn Lightning Serpents to roam within it without causing damage. What Ning had to do was to change his body to become a perfect lightning vessel, capable of allowing lightning sea serpents and Ninehorn Lightning Serpents to roam about it with impunity.

Perhaps in terms of power, there was no way he could match Exalted

Celestial Thundergod, but his affinity towards lightning would become closer than even the Thundergod's.

In truth, this alone was testament to how difficult it was to transform one's divine body. The major power who developed this evasion technique was definitely an extraordinary individual. The only reason why the True God which Ning had acquired this technique from even had access this technique was because he had been extremely lucky when adventuring in a dangerous area.

"Argh." Ning could sense his entire body being wracked by pain.

The divine body had to be transformed in a procedural manner.

The first step was to use weak lightning bolts to transform it. Next, he would slowly upgrade the power of the lightning, allowing his divine body to become even more perfectly affiliated with lightning, until finally it was suitable for Ninehorn Lightning Serpents to reside within!

The other types of lightning were easily encountered. Ninehorn Lightning Serpents, however, were incredibly rare and precious. Ning had been planning to slowly train within the Three Realms, but he was now forced to enter the lightning seas. The power of the lightning within the lightning seas would increase the further he went in, making it quite a suitable place for him. However, what awaited Ning within the heart of the lightning sea wasn't the Ninehorn Lightning Serpents; it was the even wilder race of mindless lightning sea serpents.

As for the final step of perfecting his divine body...

Ning had planned to use the Ninehorn Lightning Serpent to do this. The lightning sea serpents were simply too wild; clearly, using them to transform the body would be much more dangerous. However...since he didn't have a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent, he had no choice but to accept the dangerous alternative.

Time slowly passed on. His divine body transformed at a very slow pace, and every so often a small part of his body would break apart. Ning would hurriedly use his divine power to repair the damage, then continue with his efforts. He spent more than a month within the white cocoon of

lightning. Still completely naked, he allowed the white lightning to roam across his body and even inside his body, suffering no damage at all.

“Continue.” Ning soon began to advance towards the deeper parts of the lightning sea.

Slowly, the color of the lightning began to turn darker and darker, and they began to increase in power as well.

Ning came to a halt, then once more began his cultivation. He guided the dull white lightning bolts into his body, allowing them to transform it. He spent merely half a year before succeeding, then once more headed deeper into the sea...

Once Ning reached an area where all the lightning was gray, he came to a halt. He began to use the gray lightning to transform his divine body. This time, he succeeded after just a few days.

“The final step is before me.” Ning stared forward. Past this region of gray lightning was the region of black lightning.

The black lightning serpents swam everywhere. Once they moved at full speed, they would be moving at the speed of light, giving them extraordinary power and savagery.

No matter where Ning looked, he could only see these lightning sea serpents; he was unable to see any Ninehorn Lightning Serpents at all.

“Using lightning sea serpents to transform my body is very dangerous...” Ning stared forward, sensing a certain pressure that made it hard for him to breathe. His [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] was completely incapable of withstanding such terrifying lightning bolts. Even major powers would fear them; Ning was nothing by comparison.

“If I had a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent, my chances would be comparatively greater. Well...there’s nothing for it.” Ning once more activated the body transformation technique. Once more, the golden tattoos appeared atop his skin, quickly forming together into a cocoon of golden light, causing the lightning around Ning to begin to swirl towards him.

Ning continued to advance forward, moving towards the region where the black lightning intersected with the gray lightning.

Whoosh.

Whoosh.

Crackle.

The lightning sea serpents were wild and unbridled. They were in the shape of serpents but possessed no sentience. In truth, they were nothing more than peculiarly-shaped bolts of lightning.

Finally, a lightning sea serpent at the border region brushed past Ning's body. The black lightning was instantly attracted towards the golden barrier formed by the divine tattoos, resulting in a cocoon of black electric light surrounding Ning, who immediately retreated back into the region of gray lightning.

"Time to begin." Black electricity crackled within the cocoon. Ning carefully guided a strand of black lightning from the cocoon into his own divine body, allowing it to invade.

Lightning sea serpents and Ninehorn Lightning Serpents were both types of lightning; the only difference was that Ninehorn Lightning Serpents were sentient. If he was able to succeed in transforming his body via lightning sea serpents, it would also become suitable for Ninehorn Lightning Serpents.

BOOM!

The nude Ning's arm instantly blew apart...and then the cocoon of black lightning collapsed as well. When the vestiges of black lightning brushed past Ning's body, it instantly collapsed and transformed into dust, leaving nothing else behind.

"Failure." Outside the sea of lightning. Ning was still seated atop his Voidboat, and his face turned pale. The pain his clone had felt as it was destroyed filled Ning with utter agony. The lightning sea snakes were simply too terrifying; even the portion of true soul within the clone had been reduced to nothing. "Damn. The lightning sea snakes are far too

wild. I just guided a tiny part of their energy into my body, but wasn't even able to succeed in transforming one of my arms."

"Let's do it again." Ning once more sent a clone forth.

Although he had sent just a single clone into the lightning sea, all of his other clones had shared in the experience. They had all begun to ponder on how to increase his chances of succeeding in transforming his body. Although the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] evasion technique had very detailed notes, once the time came to actually apply the technique, experience made a tremendous difference.

This death had given Ning experience in using a lightning sea serpent to transform his body. Next time, he would avoid certain mistakes and do better.

After three months...the second clone died as well.

"Again."

The other bodies were all pondering carefully on what to do. His true body's clones continued to enter the lightning sea, testing and trying new techniques, but this was indeed the most dangerous part of training in this divine ability. The technique's notes didn't exaggerate at all; the stated 90% chance of death wasn't just talk! This was even more true for Ning, who was using the extremely dangerous method of using lightning sea serpents to transform his body.

In the blink of an eye, more than four years had gone by. Ning remained within the Voidboat, staring at the distant, vast sea of lightning.

"It's been more than four years."

"My other fifteen clones have all died, but I still haven't succeeded. I was just a tiny, tiny bit off." Ning gritted his teeth.

His true body's clones had all died. Only one of them remained alive, and that one would be able to slowly grow out new clones. This was a process that allowed for the rebirth of the true soul, the soul, and the divine body. However, a fairly long period of time was required. To completely recover all fifteen bodies would take countless years. This was the reason why

Youngflame Freak had felt such despair when he lost his sixteen clones.

There was one other method that could be used to quickly replenish the clones; to use the incomparably marvelous 'chaos nectar'. Ning was able to use chaos nectar to break through from the first level of the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] to the second level; to use it to merely rebuild his clones was a waste of precious resources.

But the great storm had already descended...Ning simply didn't have the time he needed to allow his clones to recover.

"I'll have to use chaos nectar."

Swoosh.

Ning spent a full hour travelling towards an enormous star within the primordial chaos. He located a mountain estate, then temporarily secluded himself within it. He then entered the Starseizing Manor, beginning his training.

"Chaos nectar can be used to train in the second level of the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods]. I, however, am wasting it in replenishing my divine body..." Ning himself felt heartache at the waste. However, this was all for the sake of learning the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent]. This was an evasion technique that would make even major powers grow red-eyed with envy, an absolutely first-class evasion technique that would allow him to always have the initiative.

When those ten Golden Crows had devastated the Primordial Era, not even Mother Nuwa had been able to do anything about them, precisely because the [Golden Sunstreak] was simply too powerful.

Ning pulled out the stopper to a black bottle. Pop! The stopper came out, and Ning stopped worrying about the cost. Closing his eyes, he began to employ the regenerative technique included in the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods]. Instantly, one drop of chaos nectar after another began to fly out of the black bottle. Every single drop contained countless bubble that were like worlds unto themselves. The bubbles would appear and disappear in a marvelous, unending cycle of creation and destruction.

Ning slowly absorbed the chaos nectar into his body.

Whoosh.

An illusory figure flew out from within Ning's body, then solidified. Instantly, a second Ning appeared.

As more time passed on, additional bodies were restored and rebuilt. In the end, a total of sixteen Ji Nings appeared within the Starseizing Manor. This was the limit; there was no way he could regain any more.

"The amount of chaos nectar needed to replenish my clones is actually the same as needed to break through to the second stage of the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods]." Ning truly felt heartache at the cost.

"Again."

"I refuse to believe that I'll fail this time as well."

Ning left the cave, then rode the Voidboat back into the primordial chaos, heading once more towards the sea of lightning.

Chapter 49: Success

The Voidboat once more came to a halt at the borders of the lightning sea. Yet another clone flew out into the countless streaks of lightning, beginning to slowly transform its divine body.

In truth, Ji Ning could've transformed one clone to the level of being able to withstand the gray lightning, then halted the transformation process and used it as the 'base template' for restoring his other clones. That way, all of the recreated clones would start with enough affinity for lightning to immediately go and try to be transformed by using the black lightning sea serpents. That would allow for more time to be saved. Ning, however, didn't do this; he continued to have every single clone go through the slow transformation process.

That way, with each attempt Ning would continue to accumulate more experience.

At present, the reason why Ning was able to endure the gray lightning was thanks to his divine body having trained in the Ninth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], rather than due to him being experienced in lightning. He only succeeded due to his incredibly tough body. By testing things out time and time again, he was accumulating experience. He would rather spend an extra three months gaining experience than potentially waste a tiny bit of chaos nectar.

"Mm." Atop the Voidboat, Ning frowned. He once more sensed the agony of his soul being destroyed.

Yet another failure.

"Again."

Swoosh.

Another streak of light flew out and entered the sea of lightning.

Clones of Ning's original body continued to advance, each of them being felled in turn by the lightning sea serpents. Clearly, using them to transform his body was incredibly difficult. However, as he continued to

gain experience and perfect his technique, each time he was able to endure the lightning sea serpents for increasingly long periods of time.

“Nine dead.”

“Ten dead.”

Ning felt tremendous heartache as well. Every single clone represented some of his chaos nectar.

“I just need to hold on for a while longer. Just now, if I was slightly luckier, I might’ve succeeded.” Ning did his best to maintain complete calmness as he continued his attempts.

Within the region of gray lightning, there was a cocoon of black lightning. Within the cocoon, Ji Ning’s nude body was covered with dim flickerings of black lightning. His skin and his muscles would occasionally be destroyed, but they would almost instantly recover and heal. Ning’s eyes were closed, and all of his heartforce was focused on guiding the strands of black lightning. The power of the lightning sea serpents was simply too terrifying; he wasn’t able to forcibly command even the tiniest part of it, just guide it.

Clearly, Ning had gained increasing amounts of experience in this technique, at the cost of paying with his life over and over.

Starting with his hands, his entire body began to transform. His torso... his four limbs...his head.

Whoosh.

Ning’s eyes suddenly opened.

Swish! Swish! Black lightning shot out from his eyes, not damaging them in the slightest.

“I finally succeeded.” Ning willed the barrier of golden tattoo-light to disappear. Instantly, the cocoon of black lightning collapsed as well. The black lightning sea snake lashed out chaotically, some of it sweeping past Ning’s body as well. However, the lightning simply shot through Ning’s body without damaging it. Ning continued to stand there, completely

unharmmed. In fact, some of the black lightning even swirled around inside of his body.

“I finally succeeded!” Ning excitedly clenched his fists. After having been completely stonewalled by Exalted Celestial Thundergod, his only hope was to risk the sea of lightning. At first, he had failed multiple times, causing him to begin to worry. What if he died dozens of times without succeeding? Was he supposed to use up all of his chaos nectar on this single technique?

Fortunately, as his experience increased, he was able to withstand the transformation process of the lightning sea serpent for increasingly long period of times. Ning felt more confident in himself upon seeing that he was improving...and today, he had finally succeeded.

“The remaining steps will no longer be dangerous.” Ning let out a relaxed chuckle. “The next step will be to tame a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent. I don’t have Thousandrot Godfruits or a Myriad Thunders Godgem, but I do have chaos nectar. Clearly, the only issue before me is actually finding one of them.”

“Time to go.”

This time, Ning headed straight towards the field of endless black lightning in a fearless manner. The black lightning bolts were all in the shape of serpents, and they flew about with wild abandon with utterly heaven-wrecking power. However...no sea wave, no matter how vast, could drown a fish. This region of lightning sea snakes could be described as an lethally dangerous zone for others, but it was no longer of any danger to Ning. Still, upon actually entering the region, Ning still slowed down his advance and advanced cautiously.

One lightning sea serpent after another flashed past Ning, some brushing against him. Ning, however, simply felt a warm, gentle feeling throughout his body.

“Ha.” He let out a chuckle, then flew all the way into the region.

“Time to search for a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent.”

As Ning flew through the region of black lightning, he continuously released his heartforce to search the region. Heartforce was inherently formless, and so not even the lightning sea serpents were capable of damaging it. Given how far Ning's coresense stretched, he was quickly able to locate a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent located deep within the sea of lightning. Not hesitating at all, Ning immediately flew in that direction, boring deep into the heart of the lightning sea.

Prior to this, Ning was still able to see the primordial chaos if he raised his head. Now, however, the only thing he could see anywhere were those flashes of black lightning.

After flying for a full hour, a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent drew close to Ning's direction.

"Perfect." Ning had long ago formed a 'serpent egg' of divine tattoos within his body. So long as a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent touched his body, it would immediately be drawn inside.

Swoosh! Ning did everything he could to move closer to that Ninehorn Lightning Serpent.

Whoosh! The giant black serpent had nine horns on its head and was incredibly agile. It was happily swimming about within the sea of lightning, sometimes flying fast, sometimes flying slow. What caused Ning the most despair was that it had suddenly begun to fly towards a different direction. Given how fast it was, Ning wasn't even able to catch a glimpse of it, to say nothing of catch it.

"Ugh. Failed." Once the Ninehorn Lightning Serpent began to move away from him, given how fast its speed was, there was no way Ning could possibly catch up to it. Thus, actually encountering and acquiring one had an element of luck to it, especially in the encountering part.

"I'll keep going in deeper." Ning continued to advance into the depths of the lightning sea. The entire lightning sea did have a coremost region. In a lightning sea of sufficiently vast size, Myriad Thunders Godgems would crystallize within these core regions. However, this one had been discovered by the Three Realms long ago. Given how able the likes of

Suiren and Daoist Three Purities were, if there were any godgems within it, they would've been able and willing to pay the price necessary to enter the core regions to harvest the godgems. Mother Nuwa in particular was completely capable of easily traversing the sea.

Thus, Ning didn't believe that he would encounter a Myriad Thunders Godgem within the core.

He continued to fly deeper and deeper into towards core...

He flew fairly slowly within the lightning sea. Given that the lightning sea was also quite vast, he flew for two full months. Although he encountered more than a hundred Ninehorn Lightning Serpents, not a single one of them touched him. One of them was so close that Ning was able to see it with the naked eye, but alas...with a swish, it flew past Ning without touching him. Ning frantically expanded his body to become ten thousand kilometers in size, but was still unable to touch it.

The serpent was simply too fast.

After flying for more than two months, Ning finally arrived at the core region of the lightning sea.

He spread out his heartsense. He was able to sense that a series of terrifyingly powerful ripples were emanating from the core; clearly, this was the wellspring of power for the lightning sea. There was a large number of Ninehorn Lightning Serpents around the wellspring as well. In this place, Ninehorn Lightning Serpents were far more common than in any other place. This was the reason why Ning had come here.

"As expected, there are no Myriad Thunders Godgems here." However, Ning only felt excitement. "Now that I've finally arrived here, I can see that there are plenty of Ninehorn Lightning Serpents here. I should be able to touch one."

Whap!

Suddenly, an enormous serpentine tail brushed past Ning. It touched the divine tattoo of a snake egg within Ning's body...and then, the entire enormous Ninehorn Lightning Serpent was completely drawn towards it.

Its sentience caused it to choose to burrow straight inside Ning's body. The titanic, massive serpent had actually completely burrowed itself within the divine body of the human-sized Ji Ning, entering the divine tattoo of a lightning serpent egg.

It was as though that divine tattoo had become its home.

Ning used his coresense to investigate the tattoo, only to see that the Ninehorn Lightning Serpent had lazily coiled around itself within the tattoo, seemingly asleep.

"I really wonder how the person who devised this technique was able to come up with this lightning serpent egg tattoo. Its capable of making Ninehorn Lightning Serpents behave like ordinary little serpents that are still asleep within the egg in such a docile manner." Ning felt a surge of joy in his heart. He had accomplished his task; he had finally managed to capture a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent. However...Ning knew very well that it was the tattoo that kept the serpent docile and slumbering. He himself was completely unable to control it as of now.

If he wanted to control it, he'd have to tame it and transform it on a fundamental level. Only then would it truly become part of his evasion technique.

"Time to go." Ning slowly began to fly towards the outside.

After spending three full months in flight, he finally flew out of the depths of the lightning sea, past the borders, and onto the Voidboat.

Within the Starseizing Manor.

Ning was seated in the lotus position within the main hall. Before him were seven black bottles. According to the records, taming a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent should only require six bottles, but Ning was worried about running out mid-way. Thus, he added an extra bottle.

"Ouch. Still...this divine ability will be worth it. Even the most supreme of existences in the Three Realms would want to acquire it. To trade six bottles of chaos nectar for it...worth it!" Ning closed his eyes, beginning to tame the serpent in accordance with the notes recorded regarding the

technique.

Whoosh.

Drops of chaos nectar began to fly out, each filled with extraordinary power. The drops burrowed their way into Ning's body. Under Ning's guidance, they flew straight towards the divine tattoo of a lightning serpent egg, then penetrated into the body of the Ninehorn Lightning Serpent. Once the chaos nectar entered its body, the serpent felt an incredibly comfortable sensation.

As this happened, a golden tattoo suddenly appeared as well. Ning had manifested it, and he sent the tattoo flying forward, imprinting it onto the serpent's body.

One golden tattoo after another began to appear, landing on the serpent's body nonstop. At the same time, drops of chaos nectar continued to flow into the serpent's body. Because of the chaos nectar, the serpent felt incredibly relaxed and comfortable. Thus, it didn't fight back at all. Otherwise...it would've been shocked and immediately fled the lightning serpent egg, at which point Ning would only be able to stare blankly.

Time flowed on.

Ning's chaos nectar continued to be used up, and more and more divine golden tattoos appeared on the Ninehorn Lightning Serpent's body. It slowly began to transform, becoming friendly towards Ning. In fact, Ning's soul could vaguely sense its presence. It was a sensation akin to sensing his own spirit-beast. However, the sensation was still very weak as of now.

One bottle of chaos nectar after another continued to be used up...

The serpent grew increasingly gentle, and its violent, offensive power began to disappear.

.....

"Whew." Ning opened his eyes, revealing a smile.

He could sense the spiritual connection between himself and the Ninehorn Lightning Serpent that lay coiled within the lightning serpent

egg inside his body. However, although the little serpent was sentient, its intelligence level was too low; all it had was a vague sense that Ning was the most important thing in the world to it.

“I really did use up six bottles of chaos nectar.” Ning took a look and did a tally. “In fact, a little bit of the sixth bottle is still left.”

Ning stood up within the empty region outside the lightning sea. With but a thought, he instantly caused the black lightning serpent to appear and swirl around his body. In fact, the little serpent even used its head to brush against Ning’s face in a very friendly manner.

“Let’s move.”

Ning willed it, and swish! A streak of black light flashed, and Ning suddenly appeared far away. Then, with another flash of black light, Ning reappeared at his original position.

“With this divine ability...” Ning had a look of anticipation in his eyes. “Senior apprentice-sister, I’ll definitely force the Seamless Gate to let you come back.” Prior to this, his chances of successfully forcing the Seamless Gate to lower its head were quite low; all he could do was try his best for her sake. Now, however...Ning truly felt confident.

Chapter 50: Stunned

Seated aboard the Voidboat, Ji Ning shuttled through the primordial chaos, quickly arriving at the icy star which contained the stone stele for the prisonworld.

Swoosh.

A black lightning serpent suddenly appeared, covering the Voidboat around it. In a flash, it moved millions of kilometers to reach a desolate plain which was covered with pristine, untouched ice. Ning put away his Voidboat, landed atop the plain, then laughed as he looked at the ground. “Come out.”

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Three streaks of light shot out from the icy ground, then flew towards Ning. It was a trio of divine swords.

“Master.”

“Greetings, Master.”

“Master, are you going to take us into battle now?”

Three black-robed children appeared atop the three swords. They looked to be four or five years of age. Each of them was very handsome, with adorable faces that were just asking to be pinched. However, the black robes they wore gave them a cold, severe aura...and yet, their words were filled with excitement and liveliness.

Ning grinned.

These three swords were the Darknorth swords! Ning had kept the Darknorth swords within the prisonworld this entire time. Quite a few alien Outsiders had died by Ning’s hand within the prisonworld, and even a first-tier True Immortal who was equivalent to a Daofather of the Three Realms had been slain. The amount of baleful energy generated by their deaths was enormous. The [Armaments of Sin] technique had been applied to the Darknorth swords, and all three of them had broken through the apex of the Pure Yang level to become Protocosmic spirit-

treasures.

Once top-grade Pure Yang treasures advanced to become Protocosmic spirit-treasures, they would immediately become high-grade Protocosmic treasures.

The three Darknorth swords were now all high-grade Protocosmic spirit-treasures. However, Ning could sense that they were very close to becoming supreme Protocosmic spirit-treasures. The amount of baleful energy generated by the death of that female True Immortal within the prisonworld had been truly enormous. Ning was going to deal with the Seamless Gate again, but he didn't have any particularly powerful swords with him, which was why he had sent one of his incarnations to go and bring out his three Darknorth swords.

Ning had to be very careful during this extremely dangerous period of time. There was no way that he would go to the stone stele's location without a very good reason. It was entirely possible that one of these days, a major power might be following him or spying on him. If he was followed when pulling out treasures from the stone stele, resulting in the stone stele being discovered, he would be in serious trouble! Thus, he had already secreted his treasures in the surrounding area. That way, even if someone followed him to this star, they wouldn't know about the stone stele.

But of course...given that Ning had fourth-level heartforce, it would be extremely, extremely difficult to follow him without him noticing. The Seamless Gate did have some individuals who were capable of it, but for now at least Ning wasn't important enough for those figures to lower themselves to sneak after him.

"Of course I'm talking you battle. Number One, Number Two, Number Three...this time, we're going to let the Seamless Gate get a good taste of your power!" Ning laughed.

"Those Seamless Gate imbeciles...they are so dead."

"We definitely have got to let them know our power!"

"Right on."

The three little fellows were all extremely excited. The process of gaining a soul via the [Armaments of Sin] upgrade was a fairly slow one, and the Darknorth swords hadn't been with Ning for that long to begin with. Sufficiently old Pure Yang treasures would be able to gain souls even without any special techniques. Now that these three had all broken through to become Protocosmic treasures, they all gained spirits of their own.

In truth, Protocosmic spirit-treasures could be considered living creatures. They could exist on their own, and they could even engage in cultivation.

The big bear of the Starseizing Manor, for example. Ning had seen it cry, which had made him feel as though the bear was an actual, living being. And it was true; thanks to his extreme age, the giant yellow bear had long ago broken through and had begun to cultivate on his own. After Ning had barged into the 'underwater estate' and become the heir to Daoist Threelives, the giant yellow bear had naturally wanted to take care of him. Prior to Ning becoming an Empyrean God, though, the giant yellow bear refused to let him completely bind the estate.

This was the reason why, when Ning had taken on Subhuti as his master, Subhuti had said that it was not yet the right time for the giant yellow bear to leave the manor. It was because once the bear escaped the manor and lived on his own, there would be no way for Ning to control it.

Now, Ning had complete control over the manor. But since they were in dangerous, stormy times, the giant yellow bear was willing to remain as the spirit of the treasure, accepting Ning as his continued master. If he was to venture out alone, his chances of dying would be too high.

"Let's go." Three Darknorth swords in hand, Ning headed out.

Upon returning to the Three Realms, Ning immediately used his talisman to contact his master. He then returned to the Crescent major world.

Mount Innerheart. The Daoist monastery.

"Master," Ning said respectfully.

Subhuti looked at Ning.

“Master, please take a look.” Ning handed a furled scroll over to his master.

“Can it be yet another technique?” Patriarch Subhuti chuckled upon seeing this. Still, he accepted the scroll with a smile. He immediately sent his coresense into the scroll...and then he fell silent.

Ning just stood there quietly, waiting.

Finally, Patriarch Subhuti couldn't help but let out a surprised sigh. Scroll in hand, he said, “A fine divine ability. A fine divine ability! Even I want to train in it after reading it. Alas, the requirements of this divine ability are extremely hard to meet. Transforming the divine body, then taming a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent...all of this is extremely difficult.”

“Right. Disciple, I heard that you paid a visit to Exalted Celestial Thundergod. I was wondering why you went to seek him out...but upon seeing this technique, I imagine that you must've sought him out for the sake of acquiring a Ninehorn Lightning Serpent, yes?”

“Yes.” Ning nodded.

“Ugh. To Thundergod, those serpents are as important as his life.” Patriarch Subhuti shook his head. “Thundergod has a foul temper. During the Primordial Realm, when all the powers were struggling for domination, Thundergod became legendary for his temper and for being a solitary figure. He offended quite a few major powers. The only reason why he was able to survive was because he was extremely powerful and didn't take part in any of those wars. That temper of his...even if the Human Emperors, Tathagata, and Daoist Three Purities visited him, it'd be useless.”

Ning laughed. He had personally witnessed the legendary temper of Exalted Celestial Thundergod! In truth, if Thundergod was a good-natured person, he could've simply spent a few extra moments explaining the situation to Ning, and Ning naturally would not have pressed him further. However, Thundergod had instead turned immediately hostile, shouting for Ning to leave. Clearly, Thundergod really did have an arrogant, foul

disposition that made it so that he didn't even wish to waste time explaining.

"This divine ability really is excellent." Subhuti couldn't help but praise it again. "Right now, in the Three Realms, the fastest person is the Lord of All Fiends of the Seamless Alliance. Daofather Goldcrow is on our side and he is ranked second."

Ning knew this quite well. Daofather Goldcrow was the sole Golden Crow that had survived Houyi's slaughter of the ten. Mother Nuwa had saved the Golden Crow from Houyi. Back then, he had merely been an Empyrean God, but by now he had become a Daofather. By relying on his Golden Sunstreak divine ability, he was tremendously powerful and fast. However...the Lord of All Fiends was even more formidable.

At the end of the war that destroyed the Primordial Era, Mother Nuwa had broken through to Pangu's level and slaughtered the Lord of All Things, then forced the 'king' of the Seamless Gate into merging himself into the Heavenly Daos in order to survive. The Lord of All Fiends, however, had rescued and led away many of the powerful experts of the Seamless Gate. They had fled without a trace! To be able to escape the clutches of a Pangu-level deity...from this, one could see how formidable the Lord of All Fiends was.

"The major powers of the Three Realms have tried to come up with an ability like this long ago, but none of them were successful. Only the Golden Crows are born with this sort of innate ability. These alien Outsiders...they truly are formidable figures. Although the body transformation process of this divine ability is quite difficult, there should be some major powers in the Three Realm who are capable of succeeding in it. However, taming Ninehorn Lightning Serpents is another matter. Thousandrot Godfruit, Myriad Thunders Godgem, chaos nectar...I've heard of all three of them, but the Three Realms doesn't have any of them at all."

"If some of the most top-tier major powers on our side were to master this technique, they might become comparable to the Lord of All Fiends in speed." Subhuti let out a long sigh.

Although Daofather Goldcrow had the assistance of his Golden Sunstreak divine ability, in many other areas such as the Heavenly Daos he was far inferior to the Lord of All Fiends.

“A pity. A pity.” Subhuti shook his head and sighed.

Ning, however, handed Subhuti six little black bottles.

“Eh?” Subhuti was startled. Ning just looked at his master, not saying a word.

A thought suddenly entered Subhuti’s mind. A stunned look appeared in his eyes, and he hurriedly accepted those six black bottles and sent his coresense into them. The black bottles all contained drops of chaos nectar that seemed to contain countless tiny worlds within them. Although he had never seen chaos nectar before, since the various powers of the Three Realms had slain and soulscoured many alien Outsiders, they had acquired books and records that taught them how to identify it.

Upon his coresense sensing how unfathomably profound and mysterious the liquid was, and how it contained the aura of chaos... Subhuti instantly knew that it had to be chaos nectar.

“You...” Subhuti looked at Ning, feeling shocked and stunned. He had a very complicated feeling in his heart.

A supreme treasure like this...this was something the major powers of the Three Realms weren’t able to acquire, no matter how hard they tried, because they simply weren’t able to produce it. To harvest chaos nectar required setting up enormous formation. Even the King of Pangaea had to work laboriously in order to acquire and set up this formation...and then, extremely long periods of time had to pass for the nectar to be harvested. The Three Realms neither had the formation, nor had a person to set up the formation, and of course it didn’t have enough time.

Chaos nectar could transform into almost anything. For example, the bodies of the second-stage [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] were all formed through the power of chaos nectar. It was also usable for taming Ninehorn Lightning Serpents and many other things as well.

A treasure like this...Ji Ning had actually given it up, just like that?

If he hadn't, no one would've known that he was in possession of such a treasure.

It must be understood that the path of Immortal cultivation was inherently a path that was against the will of Heaven. Only by seizing enough essence and power from the world could one walk farther along this path. Although Subhuti cared deeply Ning highly, that was only because he cared deeply about every single one of his disciples. He didn't expect that Ning would offer up such a huge gift! This was a gift that would have an enormous impact on the entire Nuwa Alliance.

If the supreme figures of the Three Realms such as Suiren were to master this divine ability, then when the Endwar finally arrived, Suiren would be able to attack and withdraw as he pleased. This would have an enormous impact on the entire war.

This divine ability, all by itself, was more important to the Nuwa Alliance than the birth of one or two new True Gods or Daofathers. But of course, this would only be true if it were the likes of Suiren and Daoist Three Purities who ended up training in this divine ability. If a weaker cultivator was to train in it, the benefit of the technique would become much lower to the alliance.

"From this day forth..." Subhuti looked at Ning, sending him a mental message. "As far as everyone is concerned, it was I, your master, who discovered this treasure of yours. Understood?"

Ning was startled.

"Foolish child!" Subhuti looked at Ning. "If everyone knows that you discovered this treasure...once the word spreads, even some of the major powers of our own Nuwa Alliance might begin to have evil designs upon you. They might have the idea of trying to get even more treasures out of you."

"Although we are all in the same alliance...during the Primordial Era, we still killed each other. Think about what sort of personality Thundergod has. And he's not even that bad! Our alliance has some truly demonic

figures and some truly vile miscreants. The only reason why we are ‘allies’ is because we are fighting on the same side in the war.” Subhuti looked at Ning. “You absolutely can’t let people know about any treasures that you have. Now, I’m just telling you this out of an abundance of caution. In reality, it should be fine as I’ll only speak to the likes of the Three Emperors of Mankind and Daoist Three Purities about this treasure. All of us will sit down and discuss this, then decide jointly as to who should be the one to cultivate this divine ability. All of them have excellent temperaments and they won’t act against a junior like you.”

Subhuti looked at Ning. He was beginning to like the kid more and more.

This contribution Ning had just rendered to their alliance was truly an enormous one.

Chapter 51: Six Major Powers

Ji Ning sent mentally, “Master, will the Seamless Gate notice our conversation?”

“Hard to say.” Subhuti sent back, “In terms of mastery over spacetime, I am the number one expert of the Three Realms. I’ve folded space in multiple layers around Mount Innerheart, making it impossible for any of the other major powers of the Three Realms to find it. The only one who can do it is the Seamless Gate’s Lord of the Demonheart, who has merged himself into the Heavenly Daos. I’m not sure if he would be able to notice our conversations here or not.”

“However, the chances that he would be able to listen on an exchange of mental messages should be comparatively lower,” Subhuti said.

Ning nodded. They really did have no better options.

Ever since he had decided on giving six bottles of chaos nectar and the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] technique to his master, Ning had mentally prepared himself for the possibility of the Seamless Gate finding out! The reason why Ning had offered them up wasn’t purely out of selflessness; right now, his main goal was to ensure that his wife and his daughter would be able to stay alive. Although those six bottles of chaos nectar would be able to help him in increasing his power a bit further, the benefits of keeping them were vastly outweighed by the benefits of handing them over.

If he gave them to one of the supreme major powers on their side, that person would grow far more powerful. It might even have a major impact on the final Endwar.

Although rescuing his wife was important...victory in the Endwar was even more important!

Even if he was discovered, the worst-case scenario would be that he would be killed. However, he would be able to rely on the other two bodies he had hidden within the stone stele to bring himself back to full power eventually!

“Have you mastered this technique?” Subhuti suddenly asked.

“Yes.” Ning nodded.

“Good.” Subhuti smiled and nodded. “To all outsiders, I’ll simply say that I bestowed this technique upon you and gave you the treasures needed to train in them. If any major powers on our side ask you, that’s what you will tell them.”

“On our side?” Ning pondered for a moment.

“The major powers of the Seamless Gate wouldn’t dare act against you,” Subhuti sent. “They wouldn’t dare to cause a great battle between the True Gods and the Daofathers. You have my talisman with you, so if you encounter any danger, you can immediately activate it. I’ll know right away and assist. The major powers on our side, by contrast...might be more unpredictable. You have to be careful and vigilant.”

“Understood,” Ning said.

“Do you have any other treasures that can be used to train in this divine ability?” Subhuti couldn’t help but ask this question. “It’s not that I’m trying to be greedy, it’s simply that this divine ability is going to be tremendously helpful to our side. And of course, I guarantee that I won’t let you suffer a loss by handing them over. Three Purities and the others all have fine treasures that were left behind by alien Outsiders and even Mother Nuwa herself.”

“I have three or four bottles left,” Ning sent back. “Master, if you need them, I can give them to you.”

Ning had been planning on keeping the remaining bottles for replenishing his clones as necessary, and he had also been planning to give a bottle to the most powerful Fiendgod under his command, Redsnow. He also wished to leave a bit behind for his daughter...

“Three or four bottles?” Subhuti could tell that Ning wasn’t lying. He sent mentally, “No need. If there’s not enough, it’s not worth it.”

Chaos nectar was only useful when consumed in sufficient quantities. Daofathers and True Gods, for example, would need at least a hundred

bottles of chaos nectar in order to master the second stage of the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods]. For an extremely powerful True God or Daofather such as Lord Tathagata the Buddha or Daoist Three Purities to suddenly gain eighteen clones would have a shockingly tremendous impact on the course of this war...but alas, they didn't have enough chaos nectar.

Taming Ninehorn Lightning Serpents also required six bottles.

One or two bottles? That was only enough to help out Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. They wouldn't be of much use to True Gods or Daofathers.

Even in the chaos-kingdom of Pangaea, the core members who were important enough to be assigned the position of Prisonworld Overseer were only given a single bottle for their service. From this, one could tell that even the King of Pangaea only bestowed chaos nectar in extremely small portions. The vast majority of the chaos nectar remained under the King of Pangaea's tight personal control, as at his level the amount of chaos nectar needed would be absolutely enormous.

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Deep in the primordial chaos there was a field of medicinal herbs. Next to the field was a thatched cottage.

Multiple figures had congregated here in front of the thatched cottage. They included the elderly, robed Subhuti, the farmer-like Shennong, the heavily bearded, wild-haired, fur-clad, barbarian-looking Suiren, the distinguished-looking Fuxi, the calm and upright Daoist Three Purities, the smiling Lord Tathagata the Buddha, and a stooped figure who was dressed in tattered gray robes and who wore a savage mask on his face.

"All of you have reviewed this technique." Subhuti swept them with his gaze.

The figures before him were the true top-level figures of the entire Nuwa Alliance. They all ruled over mighty domains of their own.

"This technique is quite excellent, but what's the use when it's untrainable?" Fuxi laughed as he looked towards Subhuti. "Subhuti, what

are you scheming? Spill it.”

Subhuti waved his hand, causing six black bottles to appear before him.

“These are...”

Everyone’s eyes lit up.

None of them were fools. They had all reviewed the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] evasion technique, and recorded in the technique was the information that the lightning serpents could be tamed using six bottles of chaos nectar. For Subhuti to suddenly produce six such bottles...they naturally were able to understand what it meant.

“Here are six bottles of chaos nectar,” Subhuti said.

“But...”

“Where did this chaos nectar come from?”

These supreme figures of the Nuwa Alliance all began to grow rather excited. This was something that would have an impact on the entire war. With their side strengthened, their chances of victory would be greater... but alas, at their current level of power it was extremely difficult to grow even more powerful.

Subhuti explained, “It was my disciple, Ji Ning, who offered them up. Don’t tell anyone about this; if you do, you’ll only invite disaster upon my disciple.”

“Ji Ning?” The stooped figure with the savage-looking mask suddenly spoke out in a hoarse voice. These two words were the only words which the stooped figure had said thus far during this gathering, and he said nothing else afterwards.

Subhuti gave the stooped figure a glance. In his heart, he couldn’t help but let out a sigh.

“He himself has already trained in this divine ability. He then gave me remaining chaos nectar as well as the instructions to the divine ability,” Subhuti said.

Daoist Three Purities sighed softly. “For an Emphyrean God and True

Immortal to encounter such a tremendous stroke of karmic luck, but still be willing to part with it...rare, quite rare.” None of them were the slightest bit surprised that Ning himself had trained in this technique; after all, any of them would’ve done the same in Ning’s situation. Actually handing over such a priceless treasure, however, wasn’t something that just anybody could do.

“He has gained tremendous virtue.” Lord Tathagata smiled.

“Alright. Let’s decide who should train in it.” Subhuti swept them with his gaze.

“Your disciple was the one to offer it up. Aren’t you going to train in it?” Shennong chuckled.

“In terms of raw speed, I might not be as fast as the Lord of All Fiends or Goldcrow, but in terms of fleeing and staying alive, I’m every bit their equal,” Subhuti said. “No one in the Three Realms is a match for me in my mastery of spacetime. Although this divine ability would also be useful to me, it wouldn’t be of THAT much use. Don’t be shy or modest; hurry up and decide who should be the one to train in it.”

The other six present all fell silent for a moment.

“Let Suiren have it,” Daoist Three Purities said.

“Yes, my elder brother is the most suitable figure.” Shennong nodded as well.

None of the others argued against this decision.

“Very well. I shall train in this divine ability, then.” Suiren nodded. This man, the oldest and most powerful member of the human race, didn’t decline at all.

“I owe your disciple.” Suiren looked towards Subhuti.

“You can decide for yourself as to how you wish to pay him back.” Subhuti smiled.

Suiren nodded.

Suiren was tremendously powerful. In fact, there were many within the

Seamless Alliance who believed that Suiren was actually the most powerful individual within the Nuwa Alliance! The invisible aura which Suiren gave off in particular...it was extremely, extremely similar to the aura which Pangu had when he established Heaven and Earth. Suiren was extremely powerful in head-on combat, but he was a bit lacking in terms of speed.

If he was to train in the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] evasion technique...it truly would be like putting wings on a tiger. He would instantly grow far more powerful.

Whoosh.

The stooped figure in the tattered gray robes suddenly disappeared into thin air, having departed.

"It's been so many years, but he's still unable to get over it..." Fuxi shook his head.

"No one has been able to convince him. Not even Mother Nuwa was able to convince him. What can you do?" Subhuti sighed. "That chasm in his heart...only he himself has the power to leap past it."

.....

Sword Immortal World. Five Treasured Peaks.

Ning was seated within his thatched cottage, quietly meditating.

Whoosh.

Ning entered the Starseizer world, leaving an incarnation behind within the thatched cottage.

The Starseizer world.

"Manorlord."

An awe-inspiring horde of Immortal soldiers all bowed before him. Ning stood there in midair, staring down at the people before him. There were more than a hundred thousand Celestial Immortals and far more Loose Immortals. Most of them came from the army which Daofather Hasbear had given him, with the rest being the Immortals of the Starseizer world

itself.

“Rahu Formation!” Ning gave the order.

Swish! Swish! Swish! It was like a horde of locusts taking flight. A dense throng of countless Immortals soared into the skies. As soon as Ning had acquired the [Rahu Formation] and the army, he had moved them all into the Starseizer world and had them begin to train in it. The arrangements had been made long ago.

The 90,000 Celestial Immortals and 8 million Loose Immortals had been waiting for a long period of time. The others were simply there as backup.

With Ning at the center, the 90,000 Celestial Immortals formed into 90,000 veins and arteries, joining together and connecting with all 8 million Loose Immortals.

This was an incredibly complicated formation. Even Daofathers who tried to analyze it would find it headache-inducingly complicated. Fortunately, every single individual only had to be responsible for his or her specific assignment. Ning didn't need to worry about the other parts of the formation; he was the core, the mind, the commander they needed!

Rumble...

An endless flood of natural energy from Heaven and Earth began to wildly flood towards them.

It was as though the skies themselves were about to collapse.

The multicolored streaks of natural energy quickly solidified and condensed into physical form, and a Fiendgod of absolutely terrifying strength began to be born. First came his legs, his powerful, pitch-black legs. Slowly, the rest of his torso took form as well. His entire body was pitch-black in color, but by the sides of his waist appeared sleek, silver-colored fur.

His arms appeared as well. One arm after another began to take form, until a total of six mighty, muscular arms had appeared.

Finally, his head was created. His eyes brimmed with a murderous aura... but his face appeared to be similar to that of Ji Ning's.

“GWAAAAAARRR!”

Ning's Rahu God let out a furious, Heaven-shaking roar.

“I'm...actually somewhat unable to control my temper now?!” Ning was in control of the Rahu God. The legendary Rahu had four faces and six arms; this wasn't from a divine ability, it was how he was born. The formation which Fuxi had devised, however, only had a single, normal face, although it did keep all six of Rahu's arms.

“90,000 Celestial Immortals and 8 million Loose Immortals...the amount of natural energy they have summoned is simply incredible.” Even for Ning, controlling this much power was incredibly taxing. He was actually only able to command a very small part of the total power of this Fiendgod, but despite that his power now vastly, vastly surpassed that of the perfect Heaven Punisher.

Although Ning had other clones, there was no way he could mix them into the formation. This was because the 90,000 Celestial Immortals and 8 million Loose Immortals were mixed together in perfect harmony and balance. If Pure Yang True Immortals were to join into the formation in lieu of Celestial Immortals, it would actually cause an imbalance that would result in the formation becoming even harder to control.

“Let's go.”

Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish!

Ning's Rahu God drew out six swords, one with each arm. Three of them were the Darknorth swords, while the other three were Ananda World-Swords.

“Seamless Gate.” The Rahu-Ning murmured to himself, his voice filled with wrath and malice. Then, six swords in his hands, he teleported out of the Starseizer world.

Chapter 52: The Fiendish Ji Ning

A Voidboat suddenly departed from Sword Immortal world.

“Ji Ning has left Sword Immortal world.” The Seamless Gate’s watcher responsible for this world immediately made the report to his superiors. The exalted Godking naturally knew right away that Ji Ning had left, but he didn’t feel too concerned. During this recent period of time, Ji Ning had often left Sword Immortal world. Given that he had been quite low-key during the past century or so, without attempting a single attack, the Godking wasn’t too worried about this departure.

Soon...he would suffer for his negligence.

The Fuyi majorworld. Outside the world-membrane, a Voidboat suddenly appeared. The Rahu-Ning was located within the Voidboat, reaching out with his coresense to scan this major world with it. He quickly encompassed the entire world with his heartforce. He was much more careful this time, as it would be extremely easy for others to notice once he entered a major world.

“The Fuyi world really lives up to its reputation. The Seamless Gate has three headquarters here, one of which has five Empyrean Gods and True Immortals.” A dim red light flashed through the Rahu-Ning’s eyes. “Excellent.”

Swish.

The Voidboat passed straight through the Void, entering the Fuyi major world.

Fuyi world. Sacred Mountain Eastrise.

The peaks of Sacred Mountain Eastrise pierced high up into the clouds. Every day, Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals would come visit this place.

.....

“I’ve finally managed to enter the Sacred Mountain. I’ll no longer have to feel worried about the Fuyi Dao-Palace continuing their pursuit of me. We

monsters were born to eat people. After we became Void-level Diremonsters, all we did was eat a single city's worth of people, but the Fuyi Dao-Palace became dead-set on hunting us down. Thank goodness Sacred Mountain Eastrise is here."

"Elder brother, Sacred Mountain Eastrise rose to sudden prominence just a hundred years ago. Is it really capable of resisting the power of the Fuyi Dao-Palace?"

"Don't worry. The Fuyi Dao-Palace once tried to assault it, but they weren't able to succeed. Listen, behind Sacred Mountain Eastrise stands the legendary Seamless Gate. I've heard that the Seamless Gate is already strong enough to battle against the other major powers of the Three Realms and is currently struggling for supremacy over the Three Realms without showing any signs of weakness. How could they possibly fear the Fuyi Dao-Palace?"

"Right, right."

Two Loose Immortal Diremonsters were chatting amongst themselves, feeling quite delighted.

The Fuyi Dao-Palace had unified and taken over the Fuyi world long ago. Naturally, it had laid down rules of its own! This caused many Diremonsters and Fiendgods to feel disgruntled. Although some Diremonster cultivators were able to calmly abstain from a diet of meat, many had delighted in eating human flesh since they were young. Normally, they had to be extremely careful due to the suppressive power of the Fuyi Dao-Palace, and they would only dare to furtively eat a few people here and there. Whenever they were caught, they would immediately be faced with the pursuit of the Dao-Palace.

.....

"I heard that Sacred Mountain Eastrise has Empyrean Gods and True Immortals within it."

"If we were to become apprenticed to one of them...that really would be a tremendous stroke of fortune." The two loose-haired, savage-looking men walked forward, shoulder to shoulder. These two were humans, but

given how humanity had flourished throughout the Three Realms, the race had naturally given birth to a number of viledoers and miscreants. Clearly, the Seamless Gate was quite an alluring option for these vile fiends.

.....

Suddenly...

An enormous boat appeared outside of Sacred Mountain Eastrise. The boat was many tens of thousands of meters long, and atop the boat stood a peerless six-armed Fiendgod. The baleful aura emanating from him caused the entire world to seemingly turn gray. The natural world was itself affected, and countless gray stormclouds began to appear.

“What’s that?!”

“Th-that’s...”

“G-god...”

The many Fiendgods and Immortals atop Sacred Mountain Eastrise were all completely stupefied. Just staring at that peerless Fiendgod caused them to shiver and feel their hearts fill with fear. In fact, they felt as though they couldn’t even move their fingers. The invisible presence and pressure emanating from this titanic Fiendgod caused even their very thoughts to turn sluggish. They weren’t even able to think normally. This was terror that sprung from their very lifeforce itself!

The body of this Fiendgod was formed by Ji Ning commanding 90,000 Celestial Immortals and 8 million Loose Immortals, after all. Its presence alone was far more terrifying than that of even many True Gods and Daofathers. But of course, Ning was only able to actually make use of a very small amount of this Fiendgod’s body.

“BREAK!”

One of the Rahu-Ning’s Darknorth swords flashed outwards, leaving behind a terrifying scar in the skies as it stabbed towards a barrier of golden light covering Sacred Mountain Eastrise. The enormous golden barrier covered the entire mountain and was a protective formation.

When the Fuyi Dao-Palace had attacked, they had been unable to break through this protective formation.

Brightmoon sword-art, Blood Drop stance!

A sword shot out, seeming to bore a hole through reality itself. The enormous barrier of golden light trembled for a moment, and then it quickly began to collapse as the enormous sword bored a hole through it as well.

“Run!”

“Oh my...”

“He shattered the formation protecting Sacred Mountain Eastrise with one stance.” Many Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals were barely able to think properly right now, thanks to the sluggishness of their mind. The Celestial Immortals and higher-ranking cultivators, however, were still able to maintain their calm. The five Empyrean Gods and True Immortals in particular, although absolutely terrified out of their mind, weren’t particularly affected by the awesome presence of the Fiendgod.

“Flee!”

“Flee right away!”

“We’re doomed.”

The five of them were both frantic and furious as they tried to come up with ways to escape.

Whoosh!

The Rahu-Ning took just a single step forward, trampling down upon the mountains and causing the entire mountain range to tremble. Six streaks of sword-light shot downwards, seeming to cover the entire sky with their might. The five Empyrean Gods and True Immortals did their best to flee, but they were all reduced to dust by the sword-light.

“Five!” The Rahu-Ning took a single step backwards and re-entered the Voidboat. Swoosh! The Voidboat immediately tore through space and departed.

.....

“What?!” Within the vast world of darkness. The Godking was stunned and enraged. “Ji Ning is attacking again? He actually dares to attack yet again?”

The Godking was absolutely beside himself with rage. He had felt that he had given Ji Ning quite a bit of face by not attacking Sword Immortal world or sending anyone to assassinate Ji Ning during the past century. He had thought that Ji Ning had learned his proper place, as Ji Ning had been quite peaceful and calm during this past period of time. By now, the Godking had almost completely forgotten about Ji Ning!

Who would’ve thought...

Who would’ve thought that Ji Ning would attack yet again! “You are courting death.” This time, the Godking was truly furious. He was an exalted, revered figure; for Ji Ning to challenge him once was one thing, but a second time?!

“Do you really think that there is nothing our Seamless Gate can do to you?” The true body of the Godking immediately departed towards one of the main headquarters of the Seamless Gate, the First World.

.....

The Rahu-Ning moved with incredible speed, and his power was far greater than it had been when he was in control of the perfect Heaven Punisher. This was due to multiple reasons.

First of all, more than a century had passed since he had become an Empyrean God and True Immortal. His soul had been nourished by both his Pure Yang Jindan as well as his Empyrean God body, resulting in it growing until it had reached the limit of power possible. The increased strength of his soul resulted in him being able to control an increased amount of the power of the Rahu God.

Secondly, over the course of the past century, Ning’s soul heartforce technique had also improved significantly.

Third, the Rahu Formation contained a total of 90,000 Celestial

Immortals and 8 million Loose Immortals, and it was a more powerful formation to begin with.

Thus, in short, Rahu-Ning's power was two levels higher than the perfect Heaven Punisher's power. Even if he encountered an actual True God or Daofather, he'd be able to withstand at least a few blows. Of course, due to the huge difference in their respective mastery of the Dao, in the end he would still be defeated. The Rahu-Ning's raw power, however, was unquestionable.

Within the Fuyi major world, Ning destroyed two of the headquarters in succession, killing a total of nine Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. The enemies in the third headquarters all escaped, as Ning was just a bit too slow.

Aboard the Voidboat, the Rahu-Ning travelled to another major world. Ning's heartforce spread out to encompass this world, discovering just two Seamless Gate headquarters here. However, one of the headquarters was empty, with the other holding a total of fifteen Empyrean Gods and True Immortals.

"They all gathered together. Are they planning to rely on their formation to stop me?" The Rahu-Ning smirked coldly.

Swoosh.

The Voidboat quickly arrived at the Seamless Gate headquarters. This was a citadel built atop a desert, surrounded by layers of protective formations of tremendous power. A total of fifteen Empyrean Gods and True Immortals had joined forces within it, maintaining the formation and ensuring that it was kept at maximum power.

"Fifteen Empyrean Gods and True Immortals joining forces to maintain a formation. Last time, Redsnow and I would've immediately left upon seeing this. But this time...things will be different." The Rahu-Ning felt quite confident. Previously, when he commanded the perfect Heaven Punisher, a formation being supported by three or four Empyrean Gods and True Immortals couldn't stand against him. Not even fifteen of them, however, would necessarily be able to withstand the current Rahu-Ning.

As for whether or not he would actually be able to breach their defenses...the only way to find out was to give it a try!

“Careful.”

“He’s coming.”

The fifteen Empyrean Gods and True Immortals defended with all their power, filling the formation with their energy. To build up a headquarters was no small task; they weren’t willing to give it up so easily. If every headquarters had to be abandoned as soon as Ji Ning appeared, their disposition of forces throughout the entire Three Realms would be thrown into disarray. The Seamless Gate had paid a significant price in order to infiltrate all of the worlds of the Three Realms; they couldn’t just change their entire strategy because of Ji Ning. If they did, the sacrifice would be enormous.

“BREAK!” The towering, peerless Rahu-Ning struck out with his six divine swords. One streak of sword-light after another descended from the heavens.

Brightmoon sword-art, Blood Drop stance!

The six streaks of sword-light pierced down towards the layers of protective formations. With shattering sounds, they pierced through three of the layers, but this citadel was protected by a total of five layers.

“Again!” But by the time Ning was about to strike a second time, the three shattered layers had already been repaired by an influx of energy.

“Eh?” Ning frowned.

“Samsara...Heavenbreaker!”

The Rahu-Ning let out a fierce howl as he brandished his six divine swords. Each sword seemed to have transformed into a giant warhammer as all six smashed downwards towards the barrier formations. Under Ning’s control, each sword suddenly seemed to increase dramatically in weight, becoming even heavier than a titanic mountain range of ten thousand kilometers. BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! Dull, deep thudding sounds could be heard as the six swords consecutively

slammed down upon the protective barrier as the Rahu-Ning's six arms swung around him like the spokes of an enormous windmill.

The six divine swords chopped down in an unbroken, never-ending cycle.

This was a variation of the 'Heavenbreaker stance' of the Brightmoon sword-art that was used in combination with the [Three Heads, Six Arms] divine ability.

Samsara Heavenbreaker!

In the blink of an eye, the Rahu-Ning launched a total of thirty-six chops against the protective barriers.

BOOM! All five barriers were completely destroyed...and the Rahu-Ning charged inside.

However...the fifteen Empyrean Gods and True Immortals simply laughed, laughed in a very odd manner. At the same time, their bodies began to change. Prior to this, their auras had been completely different, but now their auras became completely identical, as did their appearances. All of them were dressed in bloody robes, and their skin became ashen pale.

The fifteen blood-robed figures smiled oddly as they looked at Ning. "I'll give you these fifteen clones of mine for the killing...but you are going to die as well."

BOOM!!!

The Rahu-Ning's sword light flashed out with apocalyptic power, sweeping forth and destroying all fifteen clones.

"A trap?" The Rahu-Ning had kept his coresense active, and he had noticed that two ripples of power had begun to tear through the fabric of space and descend upon this major world. "So their plan was to use fifteen of the bodies of Empyrean God Bloodriver to buy time and keep me here as their armies assembled to trap me. A pity for them that those fifteen all died for nothing."

Chapter 53: The Keeper of the Everwood

“Time to go!” The Rahu-Ning entered his Voidboat. Just as he was about to tear through space and depart, he suddenly saw lines of golden silk appear within the blurriness of the Void. These golden strands of silk made it so that tearing through space was going to be incredibly difficult.

“Not good. They’ve altered the Void in this area. It’s now incredibly difficult to tear through it. It was fairly easy when I came to this major world...it seems that they made their move when I attacked this city.” Ji Ning instantly understood what had happened.

Although all of this took time to describe, in truth it happened in an instant. And, right at this moment, the space behind and in front of Ning was easily torn open, resulting in two large boats appearing.

.....

The First World.

The Seamless Alliance had originated from the Seamless Chaosworld. Their roots were very deep, and they had spread out across a total of ten worlds. These ten mighty worlds were ten utterly enormous military bases, each of which had Daofathers protecting them. Immortal and Fiendgod armies could be rapidly dispatched from them to engage in wars of conquest against the other major worlds.

These ten worlds were ranked from ‘tenth’ to ‘first’, and the higher the ranking, the more powerful the world.

The First World was the true heart and core of the entire Seamless Alliance. Even the Allfiend world, protected by the Lord of All Fiends, was at most on par with the First World. After discovering Ji Ning’s attack, the Godking had headed straight towards the First World.

“Uncle-master.” The Godking was standing beside a violet-robed man in a rather respectful manner.

This violet-robed man was carrying a deep-violet wooden ruler on his back. His face was very calm, and he seemed to carry an aura of warmth

and amusement about him. He was in charge of protecting the First World, an individual who had a truly transcendent status amongst the major powers of the Seamless Alliance. In fact, prior to the end of the Primordial Era, he had been second only to the Lord of the Demonheart. Back then, his status had been a bit higher than that of even the Lord of All Fiends.

He...was Keeper Everwood.

He was an extremely charismatic figure who many of the major powers of the Seamless Gate admired and were willing to follow and serve.

Back during the time of the Seamless Chaosworld, the Lord of the Demonheart and Keeper Everwood had been two diametrically different types of people.

The Lord of the Demonheart loved in battle, delighted in slaughter, and enjoyed playing with the hearts of others.

Keeper Everwood was gentle and kind. He delighted in collecting various types of wood, which was a very strange hobby for a major power to have. The reason why he gave himself the name of 'Everwood' was because the type of wood he was the most infatuated with was a type of wood known as Everwood. This was a form of naturally-occurring wood within the Seamless Chaosworld. Keeper Everwood found and collected every single specimen of this type of wood, then titled himself the 'Keeper of the Everwood'.

He spent some time dabbling in formations and was a master of them, but that was just for fun. His true passion was still his Everwood.

He disliked battle, and he never quarreled with others. Whenever anyone asked him for advice, he would give them guidance. This, many major powers viewed themselves as being in his debt. When the Seamless Chaosworld still existed, his reputation within that world was exceedingly high. If he wanted to struggle with others over control of the world, the Lord of the Demonheart would've most likely found it extremely difficult to truly unify it under his command. Fortunately, Keeper Everwood didn't desire power, and so he ended up swearing an oath of brotherhood with

the Lord of the Demonheart, becoming the number-two figure of the entire Seamless Chaosworld.

His power was truly unfathomable!

He was extremely skilled in formations, spells, and divine abilities. Most terrifying of all was that wooden ruler he carried on his back; his true power lay in close combat!

However, during the war which ended the Primordial Era, Mother Nuwa had made a breakthrough and become a god like Pangu, completely dominating all her foes. Not even Keeper Everwood had been able to withstand her.

Keeper Everwood would have fallen, but fortunately the Lord of All Fiends had been so talented in his escaping skills that he had managed to save the Keeper, as well as many of the other experts of the Seamless Gate. This actions made it so that all the survivors owed him a debt. In addition, given that he was actually able to escape from the wrath of the Pangu-level Mother Nuwa, the Lord of All Fiend's status amongst the Seamless Chaosworld's forces instantly skyrocketed, and he became the number one figure of the modern-day Seamless Alliance.

However, Keeper Everwood's power remained unquestioned, and so he guarded over the First World.

In truth, prior to these two alliances turning hostile, Keeper Everwood had many friends from the Nuwa Alliance. Even the likes of Daoist Three Purities, Tathagata, and Subhuti had been good friends of him. They were so close to each other than when the storm had descended, Three Purities had told Keeper Everwood, "Fellow Daoist Everwood, there's no need for you to get involved in this war between our two alliances. It doesn't matter if the Seamless Gate is destroyed or if the Nuwa Alliance is destroyed; I trust that no matter who the victors are, they won't make any trouble for you."

Logically speaking, no one should be capable of transcending beyond the bounds of this war. Old Man Yuan, for example, tried to maintain a balance between the two sides as he was unwilling to fight, but in the end

both sides would force him to make a choice.

Keeper Everwood, however...

The Nuwa Alliance would've permitted him not to take part in this war, promising not to touch him. The Seamless Alliance didn't try to force him either. However, in the end Keeper Everwood decided to stand along with the Seamless Alliance and his fellows who had come from the chaosworld of his birth. Still, the fact that he was given a choice was testament to his charisma.

"This young fellow named Ji Ning is nothing more than a minor nuisance. You are being too serious about this," Keeper Everwood said with a chuckle. "You even had Bloodriver sacrifice fifteen of his clones. With my 'Brightvoid Worldlock Formation', his Voidboat shall become much less effective. He'll be like a fish caught in the nets. It will be very hard for him to escape."

"For you to come up with this Brightvoid Worldlock Formation just to deal with him...he should feel honored as he dies," the Godking said.

"He's Subhuti's disciple, yes?" Keeper Everwood shook his head slowly. He truly didn't wish to act against the beloved disciple of a former friend. However, both alliances were currently warring against each other. If he showed mercy to his foes, it would be the same as showing cruelty to his own allies!

"Uncle-master, this is merely Ji Ning's true body; he still has a Primaltwin," the Godking immediately said. "After his true body is slain, his power will drop dramatically, and he'll also lose his treasures such as the Voidboat. He'll no longer have the power needed to ambush us. This will be good for both him and us."

Although this was what the Godking said on the surface, in his heart he still felt resentment. He venerated his master, the Lord of the Demonheart, for his mercilessness and his willingness to pull up grass by the roots! But of course, he had to coax this uncle-master of his with the appropriate words.

"I'm not as soft-hearted as you think. Even if I truly kill this disciple of

Subhuti, it doesn't really matter. This is just the beginning. When the Endwar comes..." When he thought of the impending Endwar, Keeper Everwood felt helpless and resigned. However, if he had to make a choice, he would still choose these ancient, true brothers and friends he had met back when they had all been born from the primordial chaos.

Daoist Three Purities...Subhuti...either they would die, or his own friends and brothers would die. One side had to perish. Thus, he had no choice but to grit his teeth and choose to send Daoist Three Purities and the others on their way to death.

The Godking and Keeper Everwood watched the battle begin from far away. In truth, others aside from them were watching as well, such as many of the major powers of the Nuwa Alliance.

"Bright."

"Void."

These were two enormous formations that had been laid out by a pair of Protocosmic spirit-treasure boats, each filled with 320 Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. Like the Taiji diagram, one was Yang-aligned while the other was Yin-aligned. They came together into a perfect whole, forming the enormous Brightvoid Worldlock Formation. This enormous formation covered this entire major world, and it was something which only True Gods and Daofathers could normally accomplish.

Once the formation was successfully laid out, the planetary membrane became merged into the formation itself. To tear through the planetary membrane and enter the Void would thus become extremely difficult and require an extremely long period of time.

But of course, as the controllers of this formation, the parties on the two boats were able to easily enter this major world.

"Kill Ji Ning."

"This entire major world has been locked away. He won't have the time needed to slowly tear through into the Void, nor will he be able to teleport away and escape. He's dead."

The Empyrean Gods and True Immortals atop the two ships of the Seamless Gate were both extremely confident.

After Ning's previous assaults, the Godking had been enraged. Worried that Ning might try to cause trouble again, he had asked Keeper Everwood to come up with this technique. In truth, this sort of world-locking formation wasn't of much use in normal situations! This was because this sort of seal that had been created by merely a group of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals was rather meaningless to True Gods and Daofathers, who would be able to easily tear through it!

It was meaningless in a war...but it was very useful to catch and kill Ning, like a loach in the net. Given Keeper Everwood's skill in the art of formations, he was able to come up with this technique after spending just three years.

And now...after all these years, Ning finally encountered it.

As soon as the two boats appeared...

"Time to go." The Rahu-Ning didn't hesitate at all. With but a thought, an enormous black lightning serpent suddenly appeared out of nowhere. It wrapped itself over the Voidboat...then disappeared with a flash.

"W-what..."

"I...can't see where he went."

"Too fast...I can't even see his movements..."

The Empyrean Gods and True Immortals aboard the two boats were both dazed. This was a completely different level of speed.

With Ning having reached the speed of light, the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals aboard the two Seamless Gate ships all stared at the streak of black lightning that had been left in the skies. After the streak of black lightning disappeared, they could no longer see any trace of Ji Ning.

"How are we supposed to chase him?"

"H-how are we..."

"He instantly disappeared."

They all exchanged glances.

The Rahu-Ning quickly moved far, far away from the two enemy warships. Only then did he forcibly tear a hole through the Void and move to escape. The golden threads of light sought to impede him, making the tearing process very difficult, but because the enemy warships were too far away they weren't able to catch up to him at all. Riiiip! The planetary membrane was finally torn apart and the Voidboat disappeared.

Soon...it reappeared within another world.

"Ah, so these actually haven't fled yet?" The Rahu-Ning rode the Voidboat forward, assaulting the headquarters of the Seamless Gate on this world.

"Ahh! That's...!"

"Look at his face! That's Ji Ning. Ji Ning!"

"Why didn't the Godking warn us?"

"The Godking just warned us to leave right away."

"He only warned us NOW?! It's too late!!!"

BOOM!

The Rahu-Ning smashed straight through this headquarters with overwhelming power. The Godking had been so completely certain that there was no way Ji Ning would be able to escape that he hadn't arranged for the other Emphyrean Gods and True Immortals in the nearby major worlds to flee. Thus...they once more suffered for it.

.....

The First World.

"Impossible. This is impossible." The Godking couldn't believe it, and a look of madness was in his eyes. "How could Ji Ning have acquired a divine ability like this? This speed...it's at the limit of speed possible under the Heavenly Daos. Wasn't Goldcrow supposed to be the only person in the Nuwa Alliance who is this fast? How could Ji Ning be this fast as well? He's only human!"

“A perfect evasion technique.” Keeper Everwood murmured to himself, “For a human to be able to execute it...he couldn’t have been born with it. Did the Nuwa Alliance come up with this divine ability?”

“What should I do? What should I do? How should I stop him and kill him?” The Godking began to panic. “If he’s just allowed to continue like this, he’ll sweep through one major world after another. Our strategy throughout the Three Realms...are we going to have to upend it and give up all our effort just because of him? No. No way!”

The Godking was panicking, but no matter what idea he came up with, he couldn’t come up with anything that could be used to stop Ning.

“Uncle-master.” The Godking looked at the nearby Keeper Everwood.

“Mm?” Keeper Everwood looked back at the Godking.

“Uncle-master, please advise me,” the Godking said frantically.

Chapter 54: Berserk

Keeper Everwood looked towards the Godking, then chuckled. "I have two surefire methods for success."

"Two?" The Godking's eyes lit up. He didn't even have one.

"Ordinary methods are useless against someone like Ji Ning, whose speed has reached the limits set by the Heavenly Daos. Not even major powers can catch up to him in speed, much less other Empyrean Gods and True Immortals." Keeper Everwood continued, "At a time like this, the only choice you have is to compensate through raw numbers. Empyrean Gods and True Immortals in sufficiently large quantities can kill even True Gods and Daofathers."

"Since he is extremely fast, then send out large groups of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals to form a truly massive formation that he cannot escape from," Keeper Everwood said. "However...the number you will need to truly trap and lock in Ji Ning is enormous."

"How many would be needed?" The Godking immediately asked.

"At least five thousand," Keeper Everwood replied.

The Godking's heart instantly clenched.

Still, it made sense.

The 'Seamless Infinity Formation' was formed using 289 Empyrean Gods and True Immortals, but it was only able to completely lock down a region of ten thousand kilometers, preventing Ji Ning from escaping from it. The 'Brightvoid Worldlock Formation' was able to cover an entire major world, but it just made travel more difficult. Given a bit of extra time, Ji Ning would still be able to tear through the barrier and escape into the Void.

To create a formation that Ji Ning was unable to escape from that was as vast as a major world...the number of True Immortals and Empyrean Gods needed would be staggeringly large.

The Brightvoid Worldlock Formation itself required 640 Empyrean Gods and True Immortals to set up. If they really wanted to set up a formation

that Ji Ning was guaranteed to be unable to escape from...yes, more than five thousand would be needed.

“That many...” The Godking frowned. “It will be very difficult for our Seamless Gate to send out more than five thousand Empyrean Gods and True Immortals all at once. The two hundred I sent last time came from the Third World. This time I had to come and speak with you, uncle-master, before I could send out six hundred. Uncle-master, your First World has many Empyrean Gods and True Immortals, so sending six hundred won’t destabilize it much. But to send out more than five thousand...even with you here, things will grow very dangerous.”

Keeper Everwood nodded. “I have more than ten thousand Empyrean Gods and True Immortals here! If we were to send out more than five thousand, it’s very possible that the Nuwa Alliance would immediately send out their own army of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals to assault the First World. With all the True Gods and Daofathers both sides standing on the sidelines...there’s no way the First World would be able to survive.”

“Right.” The Godking nodded. In terms of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals, the Seamless Gate had far fewer than the Nuwa Alliance. In fact, their total combat power was lower as well! This was why they had to rely on their intelligence reports and their golems to match the Nuwa Alliance. The Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Seamless Gate were all hiding within the First World, Second World, Third World, and other bases. By relying on the protective formations that covered these worlds, they would be able to withstand any attacks from the Nuwa Alliance.

But if any of the ten mighty bases, even the mightiest First World, was to send out more than five thousand of their experts...they would drop so dramatically in power that they would be in danger!

“If we had all ten worlds mobilize together...” The Godking hesitated. “If they immediately mobilized, headed out, instantly killed Ji Ning, then immediately returned, it’s possible that the Nuwa Alliance wouldn’t be able to launch an attack in time.”

But he himself knew that this would only be true in the most ideal of situations. In reality...given how berserk Ji Ning was, and how the major powers of the Nuwa Alliance were all paying attention to him, once the Seamless Gate began any large-scale mobilizations the Nuwa Alliance would immediately react accordingly.

“If we’re fast enough...it’s still possible.” The Godking gritted his teeth.

This solution was a gamble. He would be gambling on if his side would be able to take care of things fast enough. If they weren’t...things would become extremely dangerous. Once thousands of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals were sent out, the Nuwa Alliance might waylay and ambush them...or they might launch a massive attack on the ten Seamless Alliance worlds!

“The choice is yours.” Keeper Everwood looked at the Godking.

“What’s the second method?” The Godking immediately asked.

“Just have a True God or Daofather kill him,” Keeper Everwood said calmly.

“A Daofather?!” The Godking was boggled. “B-but...”

Although Ji Ning had trained in an extremely powerful evasion technique, an extremely powerful True God or Daofather would still be able to kill him. Even though the Daofather would be inferior in raw speed, he would still be able to use spells and other abilities such as restrictive formations to slow down and bind Ji Ning, making it impossible for him to even move.

For example, if Lord Tathagata the Buddha was to attack, he would be able to lock Heaven and Earth with a wave of his hands, placing a Five Elements seal that would render Ning completely immobile.

They might not be able to match up to that young fellow in speed, but they could suppress him so that he wouldn’t be able to use that speed!

The reason why the ten Golden Crows were so powerful was primarily because of their leader, the Emperor of Monsters. He himself had the power of a True God and Daofather, as well as the [Golden Sunstreak]

technique; this was why the other major powers were unable to catch him. In the end, it had been Houyi's specially-manufactured arrows which had slain the Emperor of Monsters. As for those other nine...they instantly became much less dangerous.

Still...

Right now, both alliances had a tacit understanding; neither side wanted to prematurely spark off the Endwar of major powers. Both sides understood that given the current balance of power, the Endwar would most likely result in devastating casualties for both sides, with the Seamless Gate having a higher chance of being wiped out. However, even if the Nuwa Alliance was to win, the survivors would be very few in number.

Keeper Everwood said calmly, "If you do that, there are two possible outcomes. The first is that once the Daofather slays Ji Ning and violates our unspoken accords, the Nuwa Alliance will be so enraged that they will immediately launch the Endwar. The second possible outcome is that after Ji Ning is slain, the Nuwa Alliance will be extremely angry but still be unwilling to launch the Endwar right away. If we make some sacrifices and concessions, we'll be able to turn the page on the matter. I judge the second possible outcome as being more likely."

The Godking nodded slowly.

This was a war between two alliances. Their enemies had to consider the bigger picture as well. It was indeed unlikely that they would actually launch the Endwar just because of Ji Ning.

"But this is still a gamble." Keeper Everwood looked towards the Godking. "All you can do is first kill Ji Ning, then wait to see what the Nuwa Alliance's reaction is."

"This..." The Godking's head hurt.

Two options lay before him.

The first was to send out more than five thousand Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. This was virtually equivalent to the army that would be

sent out for a Realmwar in one of the top-tier realms. Even ordinary True Gods and Daofathers would be surrounded and killed by such an army.

The second was to have a top-tier True God or Daofather attack and instantly kill Ji Ning.

Two gambles.

As the nominal leader of the Seamless Alliance...the Godking's head hurt.

"Are there really no other options available?" The Godking asked worriedly.

"The two options I mentioned just now are all surefire ways of killing Ji Ning. There are other methods, but there is no guarantee of success," Keeper Everwood said.

"Uncle-master, pray tell," the Godking said hurriedly. Even methods that weren't guaranteed to succeed would at least have a chance of killing Ji Ning. He wasn't willing to use either of those two methods; both methods would be throwing the entire Seamless Gate into a bet.

Keeper Everwood said, "Have you noticed? When Ji Ning uses that [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] evasion technique, he first enters the Voidboat, then executes the technique."

"Right." The Godking nodded.

"The reason for that is because the mysteries of this technique primarily lay within the serpent itself," Keeper Deadwood said. "If he simply was going to use it on himself, he naturally wouldn't need to rely on the Voidboat; he'd be able to instantly flee. But he is currently carrying a large number of Celestial Immortals and Loose Immortals with him, in a formation that is shaped like an enormous Rahu God. He isn't in perfect control of the Rahu God's power. Thus, if he was to use the Ninehorn Lightning Serpent to cover up the entire Rahu God, it would place an enormous burden on the serpent, preventing it from flying too far."

The Godking nodded, his eyes lighting up. "Right. The same was true for Goldcrow; he's ridiculously fast when he flies by himself, but when he

carries other experts along with him, he'll become slower. The only option is for Goldcrow to put those people inside a magic treasure first."

"Exactly." Keeper Everwood nodded. "Thus, if the Rahu-Ning first enters the Voidboat, he can allow the Voidboat to completely cover and envelope his own energy, ensuring that the leakage doesn't disturb the lightning serpent. Only then does he use the serpent to envelop the Voidboat, which is why he is able to move with such speed."

"Whenever he attacks a region, he'll immediately enter his Voidboat and then flee after he encounters any danger. Entering the Voidboat is a prerequisite...which gives us a very short window of time," Keeper Everwood said. "Your only chance to defeat him lies in this short window."

The more powerful one was, the more important the minor details would be in an important battle. In that tiny window of time, it was entirely possible that they might be able to take Ji Ning's life.

"I understand." The Godking nodded.

Still...no wonder Keeper Everwood had said that this wasn't a surefire method. A True God or Daofather would naturally be able to seize that window to launch an attack, but if the attacks were merely Emphyrean Gods and True Immortals...it would be far more difficult to exploit that window of opportunity. Ji Ning himself was quite powerful, after all.

.....

"Run! Run! RUN!"

"Let's go."

"We poured our blood and sweat into this place and paid an enormous price to build it up. Are we really going to give it up just like that?"

"Forget about it! If we don't go, we're going to die."

The Seamless Gate's bases all began to evacuate. The major powers of the Seamless Alliance all had their coresenses locked onto Ning, and as soon as he drew near a major world the local Emphyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Seamless Gate would instantly flee.

“Running?” The Rahu-Ning used his six swords to execute the Heavenbreaker stance. With heaven-destroying power, he blasted the formations around the base into pulp. Mountains collapsed, palaces imploded, and everything was destroyed.

“If I can’t kill you, then I’ll wipe out all of your bases throughout the entire Three Realms. I’ll destroy all the bases of the Seamless Gate!”

“Building them up was hard, but destroying them will be simple. I refuse to believe that you won’t bow your heads!”

The Rahu-Ning completely changed plans. Given that he was being watched, it was unlikely that he would be able to kill many more Empyrean Gods or True Immortals. Then...he would simply cause destruction. He would constantly destroy the bases they had worked so hard to build up. It was thanks to these bases that the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Seamless Gate were able to infiltrate the major worlds; it was these bases that allowed them to withstand the attacks of the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals who owned those worlds.

But now...Ning began to wreck them all!

This sight caused the major powers of the Seamless Gate to all feel heartache and worry. In fact, they all began to send mental messages to the Godking. “Godking, you have to stop Ji Ning.”

“Godking, hurry up and come up with some ideas.”

These major powers truly wanted to personally intervene and kill Ji Ning. However, all of them understood that many of the major powers of the Nuwa Alliance had to be watching Ji Ning as well. If one of them truly was to strike out against him, the Nuwa Alliance would instantly counterattack. In fact, the ensuing fight might result in True Gods and Daofathers dying.

Their guesses were correct. Human Emperor Suiren, who had just incurred an enormous debt to Ning thanks to the gift of six bottles of chaos nectar and the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] technique, was paying extremely close attention right now. He absolutely would not permit any enemy True Gods or Daofathers to intervene.

Any fights had to be between Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. This was the rule!

.....

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

The massive, towering Rahu-Ning swept out with his swords, causing everything in their path to blow apart. The mountains collapsed and the rivers and seas were overturned. No one could stop him!

“Eh?” The Rahu-Ning suddenly frowned. His heartforce had been active this entire time, and it now discovered that the space next to him had suddenly been torn apart. He couldn’t help but turn to look, only to see a golden-armored man standing next to the tear in space. The tall, muscular, golden-armored man was wielding an enormous greatbow in his hands, and he had already shot out an arrow. The tearing in the planetary membrane was caused by that arrow.

Swish!

The arrow carried a terrifying amount of power within it. It was like a shooting star, leaving behind a dull red scar in the skies as it shot towards Ning. As for the Rahu-Ning, he hadn’t returned to the Voidboat yet; he really wasn’t going to be able to escape in time.

“What a powerful arrow. He must’ve eaten a Daofruit of primordial chaos first!” The Rahu-Ning didn’t panic at all. The sword in his hand transformed into a black hole as it swept forward to greet the arrow.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

The most perfected stance of Ning’s Brightmoon sword-art was the defensive stance, the ‘Soleheart’ stance.

This was the very first of the five stances Ning had come up with. It must be understood that when Ning had created this sword-art, he had suppressed his power to make it weaker than his foes; this stance was perfect for constantly whittling away at an enemy’s power.

BOOM! The arrow that fell into the black hole did indeed contain the

power of primordial chaos within it. It just barely managed to escape the pull of the black hole, but the arrow itself became warped and crooked. The warped arrow landed against the arm of the Rahu-Ning. Although Ning was only able to use a tiny portion of the full power of the Rahu God, its body was still incredibly powerful, far more so than that of an ordinary True God.

Even the full-strength arrow probably would've only been able to injure Ning, much less this weakened, warped arrow which had struck Ning on the arm. The powerful collision did cause the Rahu-Ning's arm to go momentarily numb, but it quickly recovered.

"This divine archer, Empyrean God Swansong, fled quite quickly." The Rahu-Ning stared into the Void outside the planetary membrane. The tear in space had already begun to heal, while the golden-armored man that had stood outside the world had fled long ago.

Empyrean God Swansong knew very well that if his arrow failed, it was entirely possible that Ji Ning would be able to kill him, given how fast the Ninehorn Lightning Serpent was. Thus, as soon as he unleashed his arrow, he had immediately fled without even waiting to see what the result was.

"SEAMLESS GATE!" The Rahu-Ning raised his head, bellowing with rage. "You've condemned my wife to the torment of the Infinity Hells, and so I'm going to destroy ALL of your bases! I will kill...kill...KILL! Kill until there is nothing left!"

"KILL!"

His powerful killing intent meshed perfectly with the nature of the Rahu Formation. In fact, Ning even felt as though he was able to control slightly more power now.

Whoosh.

He entered the Voidboat, then roamed forward, beginning a wild spree of destruction through the Three Realms.

.....

"Failure."

The First World.

The black-robed Godking had an ugly look on his face. “Given the strength of Ji Ning’s heartforce, the only option we have is to attack from far away. There’s no way to get close to him at all. But the only suitable attack method we can use from that distance is archery. But he’s actually able to take head-on an attack from a supreme divine archer like Empyrean God Swansong, even when a Daofruit of chaos has been used. What should I do? What exactly should I do?” The black-robed Godking was truly becoming frazzled.

Did he really have no other options aside from watching Ning destroy everything like this?

“Godking, what’s this all about? Ji Ning was raving about his wife having been sent into the Infinity Hells?”

“Godking, is Ji Ning acting so wildly because his wife is trapped in the Infinity Hells?”

The major powers of the Seamless Gate all began to query the Godking with their coresense.

Although some of the major powers of the Seamless Gate knew that it was their spy, Yu Wei, who had destroyed Shennong’s medicine during the Crimsonbright Realmwar, very few knew that Yu Wei had ended up imprisoned within the Infinity Hells.

As for Keeper Everwood, who still stood next to the Godking, he was even more puzzled. “Ji Ning’s wife? Who? And what’s this about her being imprisoned inside the Infinity Hells?” Given his exalted status, he naturally hadn’t paid any attention to the Crimsonbright Realmwar.

Chapter 55: Bowing Their Heads

The Godking hurriedly explained to Keeper Everwood, “Ji Ning’s wife is named Yu Wei. She was one of the countless spies we inserted into the Nuwa Alliance. The two of them had extremely deep feelings for each other. I once ordered Yu Wei to kill Ji Ning, but she actually disobeyed! Right then and there, I wanted to kill her, but given that the storm had descended and that capable people are rare, I decided to spare her.”

“During the Crimsonbright Realmwar, it can be said that Yu Wei rendered some accomplishments. I brought her soul back to us. During that war, Ji Ning’s heartforce reached the fourth level, and so he was able to completely reverse the course of the Crimsonbright Realmwar. I saw how shocking his talent was, and how deep his affection for Yu Wei was, and so I forced him to make a choice. If he joined the Seamless Gate, I would allow the two of them to reunite, and I promised that we would protect his family and his home. We would even bestow gifts and divine abilities upon him. If, however, he decided to stay with the Nuwa Alliance, I would send Yu Wei into the Infinity Hells.”

“Ji Ning...ended up choosing the Nuwa Alliance,” the Godking said.

Keeper Everwood nodded.

The war between the two alliances was a war for survival. It wasn’t appropriate for him to really criticize the Godking for his decisions, as the Godking was, nominally speaking, the leader of the entire Seamless Gate. He had the authority to make this sort of decision on his own.

While explaining to Everwood, the Godking also used his coresense to speak to the other major powers of his alliance, giving them a basic explanation. Given his status, no one really criticized him for his decision to handle things as he did.

“It seems you weren’t wrong in your judgment of Ji Ning; he really is quite formidable. And, just as you said, the feelings between him and Yu Wei were quite deep.” Keeper Everwood continued, “Now that he’s learned this evasion technique...although he’s still just a young fellow, he’s also

become a big problem. You need to think hard on how you want to handle this problem.”

The Godking nodded, a hint of gloom in his eyes. In truth, he felt tremendous fury in his heart at how Ji Ning was pressuring him. But no matter how angry he was, he still didn't dare to directly against him. In terms of raw power, he wasn't one of the truly supreme figures of the Three Realms. His side had the likes of Keeper Everwood and the Lord of All Fiends, while the Three Realms had Suiren, Shennong, Daoist Three Purities. All of these figures were unquestionably superior to him.

.....

An azure-robed man was seated atop the roof of a palace, holding a gourd of wine and drinking from it. He seemed both tipsy and sober as he stared far off into the distance. He sighed softly. “That young fellow who took part in the Conclave of Immortal Destiny in the Grand Xia...he's already grown up, and has reached such a level of power.”

“He's now able to cause a stir throughout the entire Three Realms, causing headaches for even the Seamless Gate, which is helpless against him. All those years ago, I felt certain that he had the potential to become a powerful Sword Immortal...but who would've thought he'd end up becoming much more powerful than I predicted?”

During the Conclave of Immortal Destiny, the only person which Lu Dongbin had taken a fancy to was Ji Ning, no others. In fact, he had personally requested that the Xia Emperor allow him to take on Ji Ning as his disciple.

In the end, he hadn't been able to take Ji Ning on. However...because he felt something was off, he decided to take on Ji Ning's Dao-companion, Yu Wei, instead.

“A pity that my disciple was a girl with terrible luck. In the end, I wasn't able to change her destiny.” Lu Dongbin shook his head. “The Godking of the Seamless Gate is the disciple of the Lord of the Demonheart; he's incredibly skilled in beguiling and charming others. He was able to make my disciple so very loyal to him. Alas...from what I just heard, it seems as

though she ended up being imprisoned within the Infinity Hells.”

“Still...”

“If Yu Wei was to know that for her sake, Ji Ning was actually willing to war against the Seamless Gate across the Three Realms...”

Lu Dongbin shook his head and sighed.

He always felt tremendous sympathy for lovers. As he roamed the Three Realms, he was often referred to as a ‘Moon Elder’¹ because he enjoyed manipulating events to help lovers come together in the end. As for Ji Ning and Yu Wei? One was a Sword Immortal who he viewed with tremendous favor, the other was his own beloved disciple. But alas...their destiny wasn’t something that he, Lu Dongbin, could change.

“A war against the massive Seamless Gate...I hope you will achieve what you desire.” Lu Dongbin raised his head, drinking more wine.

.....

Within a feasting hall inside the imperial palace of a minor world.

There was an old, coughing eunuch seated at the front, legs outstretched. Next to him was a younger eunuch who was helping to massage his legs.

“Try some of this cake.” Not too far away was the eunuch responsible for managing the feasting hall. He was even more solicitous than the younger eunuch, and he delivered a platter of food to the old eunuch.

“Mm. Not bad.” The old eunuch nodded in praise. But suddenly, he frowned.

“All of you, get out. Let me be by myself for a bit,” he suddenly instructed.

“Yes, yes!” Instantly, all the surrounding eunuchs bowed respectfully and left, leaving him by himself.

The old eunuch’s gaze pierced through the Void, falling upon the massive Rahu-Ning who was within a distant major world, destroying a base of the Seamless Gate. The old eunuch murmured softly to himself,

“When I gave the kid a copy of my [Heart Sutra], I didn’t expect that he would grow this quickly. It seems that as of now, aside from True Gods and Daofathers, no one can do anything to him.”

“What a freak. A freak!”

“From the looks of it...he might really become a True God and Daofather,” the old eunuch murmured to himself. “And that evasion technique. Tsk. I wonder where it came from?”

.....

The Thundergod major world.

Atop the levitating mountain peak, the towering Exalted Celestial Thundergod opened his eyes. His coresense reached out through the Void to observe the enraged Rahu-Ning.

“Ninehorn Lightning Serpent?” Thundergod frowned.

“He actually has a divine ability like this. Last time, he came to beg me for a lightning serpent...could it be that it was for this ability?” Thundergod naturally felt tremendous desire for this divine ability. He wanted to learn it as well. With the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] technique and his current level of power, his chances of surviving the tribulation would increase a hundredfold.

For example, even though Ning had the Rahu Formation, the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Seamless Gate were still capable of killing him! But now that he had the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] evasion technique, his survival ability instantly skyrocketed. The Seamless Gate would have to send out more than five thousand Empyrean Gods and True Immortals to deal with him. How could such a force be so easily deployed?!

This evasion technique, mated with fourth-stage heartforce, a soul heartforce technique, and the Rahu Formation produced an utter monster in the form of Ji Ning!

“This evasion-type divine ability...” Exalted Celestial Thundergod truly wanted to learn it as well.

Both the major powers of the Nuwa Alliance as well as the major powers of the Seamless Alliance all had to admit that the current Ji Ning was incredibly hard to deal with! His power was absolutely enough to force the Seamless Gate to change its entire strategy and disposition of forces throughout the Three Realms. They would have to give up the product of their blood, sweat, and tears!

.....

“Heavenbreaker stance!”

The Rahu-Ning’s swords suddenly increased to become many tens of thousands of meters long. They slammed downwards with such power that the very pillars of Heaven would quake.

BOOM!!!!

The towering pagoda before Ning was cracked open. Ning’s other five swords chopped down in succession, and in a total of six strikes the towering pagoda had been completely reduced to rubble. All the protective barriers and formations had been completely destroyed! It had been very hard to build them up, but wrecking them had been quite easy.

“Next one.” The Rahu-Ning once more boarded his Voidboat and began to advance towards his next target.

“The Seamless Gate still refuses to bow their head. They still refuse to speak to me. Good. Very good. I’ve only destroyed their bases on a hundred major worlds. There’s still plenty to come. I’ll take it slow. All of the bases on all the worlds...I’m going to destroy them all!” The Rahu-Ning had no thoughts in his mind save one – to destroy until the Seamless Gate lowered its head.

.....

Ning’s continuous rampage of destruction brought the Godking tremendous pressure. With each wasted moment, Ji Ning was advancing to yet another base on a major world and destroying it. The Godking’s face grew uglier and uglier. He was frantically pondering and weighing his options.

The venerable Seamless Gate represented the former Seamless Chaosworld itself. Were they really going to be forced by Ji Ning to lower their heads? But what of the Seamless Gate's face?

If, however, they did not lower their heads...were they really going to give up their infiltration networks throughout the entire Three Realms? If they had to completely change their strategy, the backup strategy wouldn't be as effective as the current one.

The storm had already arrived, and the Seamless Gate's fate would be decided by it. At a time like this...face actually wasn't as important as it normally might be.

Whoosh.

Just as the black-robed Godking was pondering, another figure suddenly appeared next to him.

Keeper Everwood glanced at the red-robed, azure-haired man who had just arrived. Grinning, he said, "Windfiend."

"Everwood." The red-robed, azure-haired man nodded slightly to him as well.

"Fiendlord." The Godking hurriedly called out respectfully to the man.

This man was dressed in red robes, had unbound azure hair, a thick beard, and eyes that were filled with azure light. He was the undisputed most powerful figure of the entire Seamless Alliance, and also its most revered figure. He was the savior of the Seamless Gate...the Lord of All Fiends!

He was born from the primordial chaos, and like the Lord of the Demonheart, he was born an Elder God. The Lord of All Fiends was born with control over a Heavenly Dao...the Heavenly Dao of Wind!

The Heavenly Daos of the Seamless Chaosworld had been Primordial Chaos, Heart, Earth, Fire, Water, and Wind.

As an Elder Fiend of the Seamless Chaosworld, he naturally had a very high status. However, he had always been quite low-key. It was only during

the battle that ended the Primordial Era that he had suddenly displayed his incredible abilities! Nuwa had become a Pangu-level deity when the Lord of All Fiends had suddenly exploded with power, saving many of the major powers of the Seamless Gate, along with many Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. He had fled with them by his side, and not even Mother Nuwa had been able to catch up to them.

His sudden display of power had caused the Nuwa Alliance to feel certain that he, the Lord of All Fiends, had been hiding his power all along. His power was truly unfathomable, and everyone decided that he had to be the most powerful figure within the Seamless Gate.

And indeed, it was true. The Lord of All Fiends sat guard over the Allfiend world, with held many of Seamless Gate secrets pertaining to the art of golems. The Nuwa Alliance had tried their best to infiltrate it, but they had been unable to succeed.

The only reason the Godking was the nominal leader was because the Lord of All Fiends wasn't willing to dirty his hands with all the miscellaneous tasks that were involved in leadership. He, however, was the figure who truly had the highest level of status within the Seamless Alliance.

"Successfully enduring this storm is what matters. We have to survive." The Lord of All Fiends looked at the Godking, then gave his instructions.

"Understood," the Godking said respectfully.

The Lord of All Fiends nodded, then disappeared into thin air. He had merely sent one of his incarnations here; his true body remained on guard within the Allfiend world.

The Godking no longer hesitated. The words of the Lord of All Fiends caused him to make up his mind.

"Hmph." The Godking suddenly sneered coldly. "The Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Nuwa Alliance have already started to assemble. It seems as though they are waiting for us to mobilize against Ji Ning. Once I send out a few thousand Empyrean Gods and True Immortals, the Nuwa Alliance will most likely launch an immediate

attack. Everyone really is fighting to seize every advantage possible to survive this storm.”

.....

The Rahu-Ning was seated aboard his Voidboat. He continued to advance through the various major worlds, and the Seamless Gate didn't move to stop him. Clearly, they knew very well that a few hundred Empyrean Gods and True Immortals simply weren't capable of catching up to Ji Ning. As for mobilizing larger numbers...they didn't dare to do it.

A vast lake. The island at the center of the lake had already been reduced to rubble, and the Rahu-Ning was standing in the middle of the rubble.

“Ji Ning.”

The natural energy of Heaven and Earth began to coalesce around Ning. It condensed into a figure that was dressed in black-robos. The Rahu-Ning glanced towards the figure, then froze. His gaze became completely glued to the figure. He naturally was able to recognize the figure; this was the Godking of the Seamless Gate. However, this was merely an incarnation of the Godking; it didn't pose any threat at all.

“You win!” The black-robed Godking spoke out.

*

1. As noted in an earlier chapter, the ‘Moon Elder’ is a Chinese deity responsible for love.

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